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NICK CARTER STORIES

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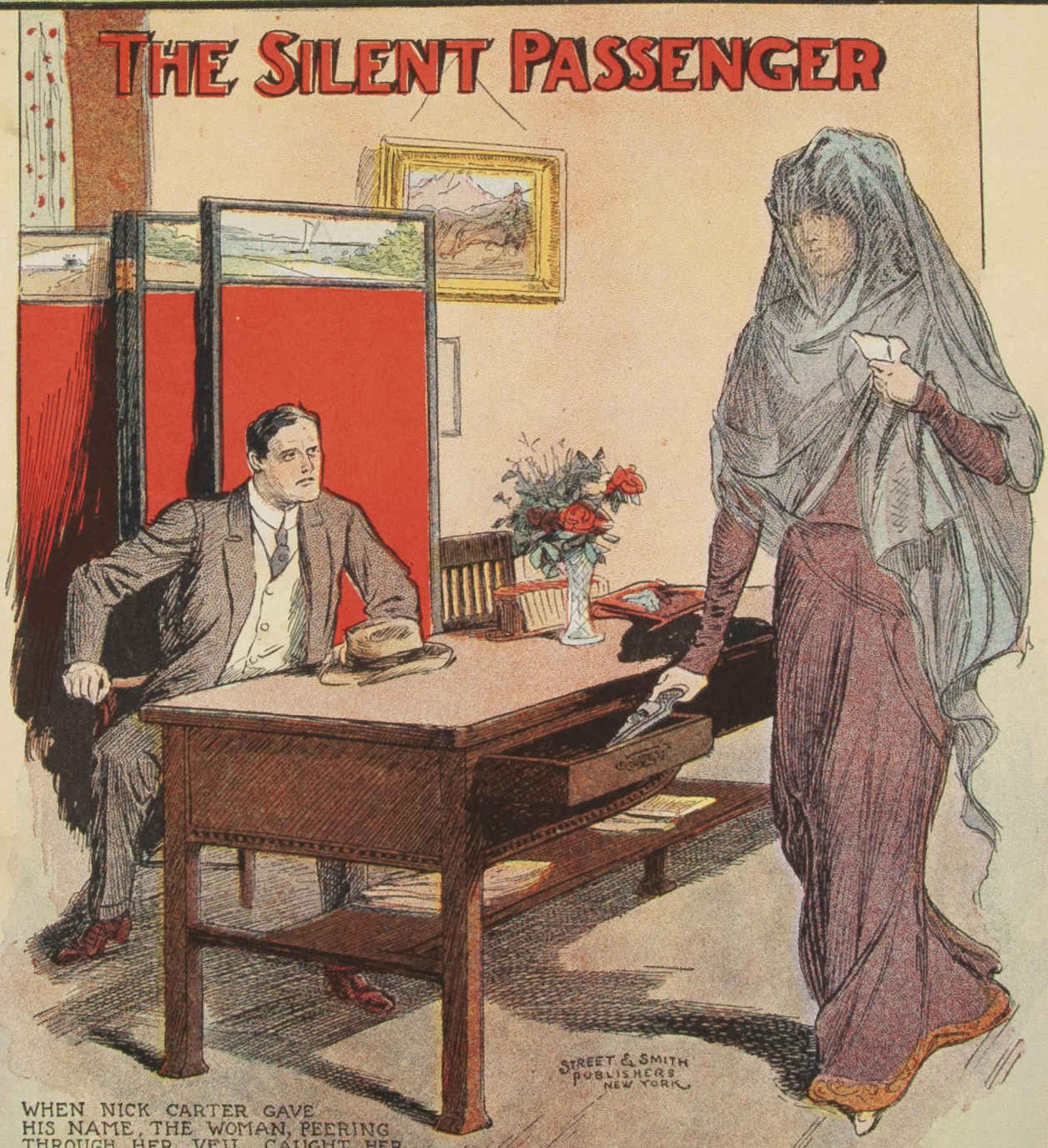
THE SILENT PASSENGER



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WHEN NICK CARTER GAVE HIS NAME, THE WOMAN, PEERING THROUGH HER VEIL, CAUGHT HER BREATH AT THE SOUND OF IT.

NICK CARTER STORIES

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THE SILENT PASSENGER;

Or, NICK CARTER'S SEARCH FOR A CLEW.

Edited by CHICKERING CARTER.

CHAPTER I.

THE SILENT PASSENGER.

Nick Carter halted in utter amazement when he opened the door, but the stop he made endured only for the briefest fraction of an instant. He stepped inside, then, and closed the door after him.

A man was lying at full length upon the couch at the inner side of his stateroom, apparently asleep. A tall man, well-dressed, and with the look of a gentleman about him at that first glance which Nick gave at the recumbent figure.

The detective reached out to touch him, and to speak to him at the same time; but the outstretched hand halted midway of the effort, for Nick Carter saw at once that the man was dead.

The quite natural impulse of any person upon making such a discovery as the detective did at that moment would have been to rush outside the room into the aisle of the Pullman car in which he was a passenger and to shout to the porter or the conductor, or to the first person he might encounter:

"There's a dead man in here! Who is he?"

But Nick Carter did none of these things.

Nick's outstretched hand, which had halted halfway to the body of the man, was slowly withdrawn. He had bent forward slightly with the intention of speaking; now he straightened himself quickly; and he stood quite still.

He remembered that he had closed the door after him, so he did not turn. He knew that he was alone save for the dead man, and presumably would not be disturbed. The train was traveling approximately at the rate of seventy miles an hour, toward New York.

A second glance at the man on the couch explained plainly enough the cause of death. It was crude and simple, homely, and apparently wanton—in the manner of execution as well as in the deed itself.

A blow dealt with a heavy instrument upon the head had killed the man. The upper part of the frontal bone, where the hair of the head joined the forehead, was literally crushed. The shape of the instrument of death was there, fairly well outlined in the impression it had made. The thing itself that had made the wound was on the floor beside the couch.

The man was lying at full length on his back along the entire extent of the couch, for he was a tall man, and the berth couches in staterooms of Pullmans are not overlong. His right arm was crooked at the elbow so that the forearm of it was resting across the wound, partly concealing it. It was an attitude quite natural for a sleeping man to have assumed. It explained why, at first glance, the detective had not discovered the truth. It was not until the detective partly raised the already stiffening arm to obtain a better view of the wound that he saw the outline of the weapon that had made it, so plainly depicted. Then he replaced the arm as he had found it; but he had had opportunity to see the man's face also.

And he knew the man; that is, he recognized the face as one that he had noticed on the train during the day. No more than that. Otherwise it was totally strange to him.

All this Nick noted in another second or two; then the detective stretched out his arm again, this time toward the electric button, with his thumb extended to press upon it.

But again he arrested the motion of that arm. His glance had again fallen to that object on the floor with which the deed had been done. A new significance attached to it which had not impressed him until that instant.

The discarded weapon was Nick Carter's own property.

It had been a gift to him, presented that morning while he was on his way to the station to take the train for New York. He had preferred to walk rather than to ride to the station. The morning air in that Western city had been keen, and dry, and invigorating—therefore inviting. Nick had paused for a moment to chat with a friend who stood before the door of his store, just opened for business, and that friend had called him inside, had insisted upon the detective's acceptance of the present, and Nick had carried it with him to the train, had tossed it idly upon the couch when shown to the drawing-room that his ticket called for. Later, when the train was in motion and he had finished glancing over the morning papers he had brought with him, he had examined his present. He had taken it from its leather case piece by piece, put it together, admired it—and then he had taken it apart again and had restored each part to its respective section inside the case; but he had left the case lying upon the couch, open. And it had remained so throughout the day, to be admired in turn by the two conductors and the porter of the car.

It was a gun—you have guessed that, perhaps—and the weapon on the floor beside the couch that had dealt out death to the stranger was the octagon barrel of it.

The leather case that had contained it—which still contained the stock, the cylindrical case of cartridges, and the several small tools that made up the outfit—had been shifted from the couch to the seat of the wicker chair which Nick had occupied for the greater part of the day; he had gone into the dining car at one o'clock for the midday meal, and again at seven o'clock for dinner. He had just returned from the latter meal now, when he made this unpleasant discovery.

The new significance which occurred to the detective and which arrested his arm as it reached out toward the electric button is obvious.

Nick wondered if the murderer had thought of it, or had planned for it—or if it were merely an accident of circumstance that made everything point toward himself as the murderer.

CHAPTER II.

TWO WENT IN, ONE CAME OUT.

Nick Carter pressed the button.

The interval during which he had been inside the room after returning from his dinner and discovering the dead man on the couch he could not compute with exactness. Approximately it might have been five minutes—quite sufficient in which to have committed the crime.

How long had the man been dead when Nick found him. Nick had been absent from the room rather more than an hour altogether; the thing might have taken place at any time during that interval.

Had the murderer deliberately selected Nick Carter's drawing-room in the Pullman for the scene of his foul act, or was it merely an accident that the crime was committed there?

Nick stepped outside the room into the aisle of the car when he pressed the button to summon the porter. There were few passengers in the Pullman; three women seated along one side of it near the middle of the car were all that were visible when he stepped outside the room and dropped upon the seat nearest his door. There had been two men, also, besides himself, when the train left the station. They were doubtless now in the café car, smoking. Nick had noticed both of them in the dining car during all the time that he had been there.

The porter came. Nick looked him over coolly and carefully.

"Porter, were you in my room while I was at dinner?" he asked, in a casual tone.

"No, suh," was the quick reply. There was a vague surprise at the question noticeable in the porter's manner when he replied to the question which he would not have had the wit to counterfeit in just that degree if he were lying about it.

"I left my room a few minutes before seven, five perhaps, to go to the dining car. I have just returned, say five or six minutes ago. An hour and ten minutes altogether. Where were you, porter, during that time?"

"I dunno, suh. I ain't been away nowheres. I's been right yere in de cah all de time. Has you lost anything, suh?"

"No. Did you see any person enter my room or come out of it, other than myself?"

"No, suh."

"You were here when I came out of the room to go to my dinner; you remember that, do you not? I spoke to you at the time."

"Yassir. Has you done lost——"

"No, I haven't lost anything. Somebody entered my room while I was gone; two persons, as a matter of fact. I am curious about it. I want to know who those persons were."

"I dunno, suh. I ain't seen nobody go in or come out of it, nohow."

"You have noticed men in the car, haven't you, who have seats in other cars of the train?"

"Yassir; but they is goin' through all the time when dinner is served in the dining car. That's the third one up ahead, suh, and there's two mo' cars back of us. Of co'se, they has to pass through, goin' an' comin', suh."

"Yes. I know. But I want you to be very certain about your replies to me just now. It is important that I should know. Two persons did enter my room while I was absent from it. I am trying to find out from you if there is not some way by which you will remember something about it."

"No, suh; honest and true there ain't no way at all."

"Were you inside the car all that time, porter?"

"I was in and out of the middle of the car, suh; comin' an' goin', an' answerin' bells, an' waitin' on de passengers; an' I was in de vestibule between this car and the next one forward, talkin' to de porter of de other car. I dunno how long a time that was, suh. We is runnin' light this trip, and it just happened that all his passengers an' all uh mine was in de dinin' car at de same time, right soon after you went out. I ain't got but five passengers besides yourself, suh; two mo' men, an' three ladies; an' you remembuh's yourself, suh, that you was the last one of de lot to go into de dinin' car. Ain't that what you spoke to me about when you did go out of the car?"

"Yes. Can you tell me exactly what I did say to you? I'd like to know how good a memory you've got for detail."

"I ain't got no mem'ry at all fo' detail, suh; but I kin remember things that's said to me."

"Well, what did I say to you?"

"You said, 'You's got things all yo' own way, hasn't yo' porter?' an' I said, 'Yassir, they's all feedin' their faces right now, suh.' Ain't that right, boss?"

"Yes; that is correct."

"They all went stringin' out uh de car one after another just befo' you came out uh your room, an' them three ladies and yourself is the onliest ones that has come back, suh. I ain't seen neither of the two men since then. I reckon they's up forward in the café car, a-smokin'."

"Very likely."

"I wouldn't have you lose nothin' on my car, suh, not fo' de worl'. I's been porter fo' de Pullman company fo' fo'teen years, suh, an' I's got a right clean record."

"I haven't lost anything, porter; I have already assured you of that much."

"Yassir; but something has happened, or you wouldn't be quizzin' me thisaway."

"Something has happened, porter; something that is very serious indeed."

"Lawdamassy, suh, what is it?"

"Two men entered my room while I was away from it. One of them came out of it again, but the other one remained. He is there now. I wanted to discover if you could recall any circumstance about it which would help to explain it."

"But, boss, why in de worl' don't you ax de man who's there, about it?" the negro exclaimed. "He'd oughter be able to tell you all about it, sure nuff."

"Unfortunately he cannot."

"Den he ain't got no sense?"

"He hasn't any, porter; that is what is the matter. He was senseless when I found him. Perhaps he would speak if he could; but he cannot. There; don't ask any questions about it just now, and don't repeat to any person what I have told you. But I want you to find the train conductor, and the Pullman conductor, both of them, and ask them to come here to me as soon as possible. I would like them to come together."

"Yassir."

"Tell them, very quietly, so that nobody will hear what you say, that a passenger on the train was lured into my room while I was at dinner, and was attacked there. Say that you do not know how seriously he is hurt. You don't."

"No, suh."

"And mind, you are not to discuss this with your friend in the adjoining car. If you have been in the employ of this company for fourteen years you must have learned how to hold your tongue by this time."

"I has, suh; that I has; indeedy an' indeedy—too."

"Another thing, porter."

"Yassir."

"After you have delivered that message to the two conductors I want you to come back here and sit down somewhere alone and try to remember the face of each man you saw pass into this car or out of it while I was at dinner; and when you have done that I want you to go through the whole train, car by car, from one end to the other, and look at every face carefully, trying to select from them one or more that you are positive you saw in this car during the last hour. That's all."

CHAPTER III.

WHERE SUSPICION POINTED.

"There is a dead man in there," said Nick Carter calmly, addressing the two conductors who faced him before the closed door of the drawing-room of the car. He stood with his hand on the knob of the door. He couched his words in so low a tone that no sound of what he said penetrated to the three women passengers.

"A dead man?" the train conductor replied, amazed, but warily keeping down the tone of his voice. "The porter didn't say that."

"The porter didn't know; and I was careful to be very sure indeed that he did *not* know. Every passenger who belongs in this car, was out of it, I think, at the time this thing happened."

"What happened to the man?" the Pullman conductor demanded.

"Why don't you let us inside?" the train conductor asked.

"Because I think I had better prepare you for what has happened, first," Nick replied. "It is a case of murder."

One of the conductors stared, the other one gasped. Nick turned the knob of the door and pushed it open, standing aside for them to enter. Then he followed them inside and closed the door and locked it; and the train whirled onward at the rate of seventy miles an hour.

"This is what I found here when I returned from the dining car," the detective said, indicating with a gesture the dead man on the couch. "There, on the floor, is the weapon with which he was killed—by a blow on top of his head, which has crushed the skull."

"What is it?" the train conductor asked, bending forward a little toward the rifle barrel, but not offering to touch it.

Nick pointed toward the wicker chair and the open leather case upon the seat of it.

"It is the steel barrel of a rifle that was presented to me while I was on my way to the station to take this train this morning," he said. "The case was open, as it now is, when I went to my dinner, but it was on the couch where the dead man is now, and the barrel of it was in its place, inside the case. I have been careful not to move or even to touch anything in the room since I returned from dinner and found the dead man here. Everything is just as I found it. I wished both of you to know exactly the condition in which I found things."

He bent forward then, as if to raise the weapon from the floor, but the train conductor interrupted the act, speaking sharply. He was very white, and his eyes strained with suppressed excitement; but he had a square jaw and a wide brow, and looked to be a man of resource.

"Don't touch it!" he commanded, and he spoke with the authority of the master of that train. A sense of the responsibility that was upon him was apparent in his gesture and in the three words he uttered. He was the master of that small, rushing world that was comprehended in that speeding train of cars. Standing there in the presence of the body of the man who had been murdered, the enormity of his responsibility was overwhelming; but he met it.

The Pullman conductor was a man of smaller caliber, but, nevertheless, he sidled up to his associate. There was no choice for either of them but to accept one theory then and there.

The train conductor would have spoken again, but Nick anticipated him. He said, with entire composure:

"I am quite well aware of the appearance of this affair, conductor. I saw it all, and realized it all before I summoned the porter and stepped outside of the room to talk to him. One might, without experiencing much difficulty, make up a strong case of circumstantial evidence against me. The weapon with which the man was killed is mine. It is the octagon steel barrel of a rifle which belongs to me, heavy enough and deadly enough to have killed an ox. It belongs in that leather case, which should be closed and locked, and the key in my pocket; but the case is open, and the key is in the lock. The porter will tell you that I was the last of six passengers to leave the car to go to dinner—and the fourth one to return from dinner. The three who returned before I did are the women now seated out there in the car. But, if it seems necessary that I should say it, I did not kill this man. I never, knowingly, saw him, until I found him here, dead."

Nick took a step forward and raised the arm that covered the ugly wound on the dead man's head. Below the middle of the forehead the face was not marred.

"Look well at the face, both of you, please," he said. "Surely you must remember the man as a passenger. Try to forget for the moment what you are thinking about me, and put your minds only upon him. Try to remember all that you can recall about him. Somebody who is now aboard of this train killed him, for the train has scarcely slackened its speed since the murder was done. It is your place, Mr. Train Conductor, and yours also, Mr. Pullman Conductor, to discover who that person is, if that be possible."

"It seems to me that it is up to you to find him, too," said the train conductor coldly.

"It is," said Nick. "But I am right here with you. We will not stop again for another two hours. I cannot get away, therefore let us be reasonable and sensible."

"Well?" he said; and then: "What do you call being reasonable and sensible?"

"Do you know who this dead man is?" Nick asked, by way of a reply to the question.

"No. He was a passenger on this train. That is all I know about him. It is all I know about you, too."

"Quite so. Unfortunately, he cannot answer for himself, being dead. I can—when the time comes to do so."

"Maybe he can answer, too, by things in his pockets, when we come to search them," the conductor said; and added quickly: "Unless you have taken the precaution to strip them."

"Do you really think that I did this murder?" the detective asked, half smiling.

"No; at least, I don't want to think so. But I can't find an excuse for thinking anything else. It's for you to show me."

"I have not examined his pockets," said Nick. "I entered the room, returning from dinner, and found him—as you now see him. I stood here for a time thinking it over. I saw and realized all that you see and realize now. I did not rush out to summon anybody because I knew that there was nobody to summon other than those three women; and they would only have been badly frightened. Nor would the cir-

cumstance have been different in any respect. The case would have been precisely the same as it is now. If I had done the deed, I might as well have rushed out to report it, as to have waited and sent for you quietly to do so. Understand, I am not saying all this so much to convince you of my innocence, as I am doing it to induce you to disabuse your minds for a moment of all thought of me. We must try to reason it out; and we must coöperate."

"Who are you? You haven't told us that—yet."

"My name is Nicholas Carter. By profession I am a detective. I am known, popularly, as Nick Carter. It is possible that you have heard of me."

The conductor nodded. The expression of his face did not change.

"Can you prove it?" he asked.

"Yes. Now, if you wish it."

"I do. But—even then, the fact will not entirely clear you from suspicion."

"No. It should not do so, at least."

"Are you armed, Mr. Carter?"

"Yes."

"Will you permit the Pullman conductor to search you, while I look on, and to relieve you of your weapons, and perhaps of other things, for the time being? Until I feel a little better assured about this affair?"

"Willingly, conductor. Gladly. I will go farther than that. I will empty my pockets of everything, in your presence."

CHAPTER IV.

A CONDUCTOR'S DILEMMA.

Nick Carter, in obedience to the conductor's wish and in pursuance of his own stated acceptance of it, quickly emptied his pockets of all that they contained, piling the articles upon the chair beside the open gun case—even adding to them the two small but powerful weapons which he sometimes wore inside the sleeves of his coat, attached there by spiral springs; and when he had completed it all, he turned again to the conductor and said:

"Now, if you and the Pullman conductor will search me you will see that I have retained nothing of any account. Then, with your permission, I will return to my pockets such articles as you do not care to retain in your possession for the time being—and we will proceed with what really interests us."

The conductor was thoughtful for a moment.

"Mr. Carter," he said then, "my cold judgment tells me that you are the murderer of this man; my intuition tells me that you are as innocent of the crime as I am. Every material thing that we find here points to you as the likely person who committed this outrage, while every innate perception I own indicates that you are not that person. During the few moments while you have been emptying your pockets, I have watched you, and I have decided to trust to my intuition rather than to my judgment."

"Thank you," Nick replied.

"You may return the things to your pockets—all of them. We will work together on this affair until the train arrives in New York to-morrow morning, for I have determined to remain with it as a passenger, after my relief comes aboard. My name is John Stratford. The name of the Pullman conductor is James Graham."

"Thank you again, Mr. Stratford."

"And now, for the time at least, I will forget that there is such a thing as suspicion against you, and we will endeavor to work together upon this mystery."

"That will be the best way, I am sure," said Nick.

"While you were at dinner, we crossed the line between two States. That means that we cannot be certain in which State this crime was committed, doesn't it?"

"Yes."

"If you are Nick Carter, the detective, you are familiar with the laws of such things. What is my duty concerning this dead body?"

"Your apparent duty, under the laws of the State in which the crime was committed—if we were sure what State it is—would be to stop the train and back it up until you have recrossed the border into that State; but I do not think it is your real duty."

"No, nor I. At least, I shall not do that."

"You are a law unto yourself aboard of this train, Mr. Stratford."

"Yes."

"And if you care to follow my suggestions——"

"That is precisely what I wish to hear, sir."

"I would say by all means to take the body on to New York with you, and not to report the affair at all until you arrive there, within the jurisdiction of New York."

"It is what I would prefer to do, if I may do it so."

"I should advise doing it so for many reasons. New York is better equipped for handling an affair of this sort. You are not certain in what State the actual crime was committed. You *are* certain that the murderer is still aboard this train. You can, with care, render yourself morally certain that the assassin *shall not* leave the train before it arrives in New York."

"I wish I could feel assured of that."

"Then, as soon as you have finished with what must be done here in this room, I would suggest—in case you have an unoccupied drawing-room aboard the train——"

"There is one, in the car behind us."

"Very good; I would suggest, in that case, that you summon to that room, one by one, the passengers who are to leave the train at the next station. A little questioning, done with care, will convince you whether or not you should detain any one of those passengers. The same performance can be gone through with before we arrive at the next station."

"I understand."

"In that manner you may be reasonably certain that

the murderer is still on the train when we reach New York. We may even have found him by that time, although I do not anticipate such good fortune as that. But in doing this, there is another suggestion which goes with it."

"And that is—what?"

"This: Mr. Graham, and you, and I are the only persons who now know what has happened—with the exception of the guilty man. The porter of this car, who seems to be of unusual intelligence for his kind, knows enough so that he must be told the rest. Beyond that, I should not divulge the truth of what has happened here."

"I see the point, Mr. Carter."

"Then we are thoroughly in accord, as far as that goes?"

"Yes. But what is to be done?"

"This man doubtless has a satchel; perhaps two. You and Graham will know about that, as you will also know where his berth is located on the train. Summon the porter and send him at once to bring that baggage here to this room."

"Good! You mean that we must search it?"

"Decidedly; and while the porter is about that, we must search the pockets of the dead man. We must know who he is, if possible. We must find out as much concerning him as can be discovered from what he has with him."

Nick reached for the button and pressed it as he ceased speaking. The porter rapped upon the door a moment afterward. Nick admitted him, and drew him inside the room. Then he told the negro, in a few words, what had happened; and when the porter had recovered from the first shock of the intelligence, Nick said to him:

"I told you to pass through the train in search of faces, porter. Have you done so?"

"Yassir."

"What is the result of your search?"

"There ain't any. I jest can't fix on any one uh dem faces, nohow, suh. I don't know nuthin' about it, any mo'n I did when you talked to me; no, indeedy. I jest nacherly done give it up, suh."

The detective turned to the Pullman conductor.

"Can you remember where this man was seated?" he asked, indicating the dead man on the couch.

"Oh, yes. His check will be in one of his pockets, doubtless; but he was in car three, section eight; and he had the whole section. I remembered him at once when I saw his face—because I talked with him when I took up his ticket and gave him his seat check."

"Will you send the porter after his baggage at once, please?" Nick Carter was taking the lead in the affair now.

"Klem, go to the section I have just mentioned, in car three, and bring here everything that belonged to this man."

CHAPTER V.

A FAMILIAR FACE.

Half an hour later, several annoying facts were apparent to Nick Carter and the two conductors.

The pockets of the dead man's clothing were found to contai. nothing at all; not so much as a scrap of paper; not even a lead pencil nor so much as a copper cent in money. The linen he wore when killed was new. It bore the unmistakable evidence of having just come from the store where it had been purchased. There was not so much as a mark upon it. His outer clothing, the suit he wore and his hat, were also new, and had been purchased in Seattle, Washington.

The porter, Klem, had returned from his quest for the baggage, and reported that there wasn't any; nor so much as a newspaper or a magazine to be found.

The short conversation between the traveler and the Pullman conductor referred to at the close of the last chapter had consisted merely of the fact that the man had told the conductor that he was just returning from Alaska after an absence of four years; but he had told nothing of himself or his ultimate destination.

The car in which he was killed was one of those that was located between the dining car and his sleeping car. The steward of the dining car, being taken into the secret, and shown the face of the dead man, did not remember having seen him at dinner that evening. He had seen the man, he was quite sure, in the middle of the day, but not afterward; and so it appeared as if he had stopped, or had been halted, at the door of the drawing-room, where he was so cruelly slain, while he was on his way to the dining car.

The porter of car three remembered that the man in section eight had carried a small satchel, but he could not describe it. He thought it was tan in color, but would not be certain about that. He did remember that he had several times during the day carried a drink of whisky to the man, but in his opinion not enough to have caused intoxication, or a condition approaching it.

The passengers who were to leave the train at the next station were called into the drawing-room of another car and questioned, one by one, but none of them could in any way be connected with the crime.

The assassin had probably gone from the room to the section that had been assigned to the dead man, and had possessed himself of his victim's baggage—and there was now no way to identify it, even if it were still aboard of the train, and had not been hurled from it. Nick hoped that the latter had been the case, but doubted it; nevertheless, he asked the conductor to wire back and request that trackwalkers make a careful search for a bag lost from the train. It might as well be said here that no such article was ever found.

Before the hour arrived when the porters began to make up the berths, the detective made a tour of the train, accompanied by the conductor.

Nick made one discovery that puzzled and perplexed him, and he was annoyed because it did perplex him.

It was the presence of a man whom he knew, among the passengers. A man he knew, and did not like; one against whom he felt some prejudice; but he had to acknowledge to himself that there could be no more reason for him to associate Thaddeus Ryan with this crime that had been committed than to suspect any one of the other passengers of it.

Nevertheless, when he completed his tour of the train he called the Pullman conductor to him and said:

"There is one man aboard of the train whom I know. I have had a very slight acquaintance with him. He is now in the café car, smoking, and reading a magazine. He is dark, with large, brilliant, dark eyes, is smooth-shaven, and is a handsome fellow. You cannot mistake him if you will take notice of a stick pin he wears. It represents a broken heart; a gold heart, with a zigzag strip of black enamel through the middle of it. You may have noticed it already."

"I have. I remember him, by the stick pin. What about him, Mr. Carter?"

"Where is he located in the train?"

"I don't remember; but I can easily find out."

"Do so."

"Have you any suspicions——"

"Not one in the world, Mr. Graham; but I would like to know if the location of his berth would render it necessary for him to pass through my car on his way to or from the dining and café cars."

When the conductor had departed on his errand, Nick sought the porter, Klem.

"Klem," he said, "go forward to the café car and bring me a cigar. You can put it in your own pocket when you have purchased it. But while you are there take notice of the man who is seated in the second chair from the forward end, on the right-hand side."

"Yassir."

"Tell me, when you come back, if you have seen him pass through this car, or if he has been inside of it at all since the train started. He is a smooth-faced, good-looking, dark man. You will know him positively by a gold stick pin he wears that looks like a broken heart."

"Yassir."

Conductor Graham returned a few moments later and reported that the man referred to had the lower berth in section two of the second car nearest the diner from Nick's, by which fact it was at once determined that Thaddeus Ryan could have had no ordinary reason to pass through the car in which the detective was a passenger.

Then the porter returned while they were talking about it, and reported that he "certainly had not seen that man in de car, no time at all."

Nick Carter did not go to bed that night. Another conductor came aboard the train to take charge of it, and Stratford remained on it as he had said he would do; and the detective sat with the three conductors most of the time in the drawing-room of the train where many of the passengers had been interrogated.

The train ran in at the station in New York City the following morning about ten o'clock with the crew and the detective no wiser regarding the tragedy that had occurred aboard of it, than when it was discovered.

Detectives from headquarters in New York met the train at the station. The fact of what had happened became generally known then, for the first time. Passengers were interrogated sharply by the New York sleuths, but with no accompanying results.

There was absolutely not one thing to connect any passenger on that train with the tragedy that had occurred aboard of it—unless it were Nick Carter himself; and there was more than one afternoon paper in the city which reported the affair that day, that suggested rather frankly that he ought to be placed under arrest.

Nevertheless, he was not.

CHAPTER VI.

NICK CARTER'S PROMISE.

"What is a man to do in working out the mystery of a crime where there is absolutely no clew to work upon?" Nick Carter asked of the deputy commissioner of police, who was seated at the opposite side of the flat desk in his own office at headquarters. "Every particle of circumstantial evidence in this case points to me as the one who committed that crime. It was done in my room aboard the train; it was done with an implement that is my property; it isn't reasonable that I should have left that gun case lying open on the couch in my room all of that day; it isn't logical to the minds of others that upon making the discovery I should act as I did act, cautiously and with method, before summoning those two conductors; it is not supposable that an utter stranger would deliberately lure another man into my room to kill him with an implement that belonged to me, or that, having done so, he would dare to remain there long enough to rifle the victim's pockets of everything that he possessed to the very last and smallest and most insignificant thing.

"On the other hand, it *is* supposable that if *I did do* it myself, I would have gone about it in practically the way it has been handled. Why, I must confess that if I did such a thing at such a time in such a place, my reason would suggest the very methods of hiding my guilt that were employed."

"Well, doesn't that very statement of yours suggest a possible clew to you?" the commissioner asked, smiling. "It does to me."

"Oh, it suggests malice against me, all right, if you mean that. Yes. But the thing is preposterous, commissioner."

"Why?"

"Would one man murder another man merely for the purpose of fixing the crime upon me, even if he supposed that he could do it? What was the use in

aiming at me through another? Why not select me for the bull's-eye in the first place?"

"There are three questions all in one. I'll reply to it as one, and by asking another one, at that."

"Well?"

"Isn't that an old saying about killing two birds with one stone?"

"Yes, there is; and you imply, of course, that the man who was killed was the real object of the assassin, and that I was associated with the crime merely because opportunity offered."

"Precisely."

"I have thought of that. I thought of it at the time."

"You have said, yourself, that there was a man aboard of that train who does not like you, and whom you feel would do you an injury if he could."

"Ryan?"

"Yes."

"I have thought of all that, too. There isn't anything in it; at least there doesn't appear to be anything in it now. Ryan hates me, of course. I was instrumental in sending his brother to life imprisonment."

"Well, possibly he would like to send you there to keep his brother company."

"Frankly, I haven't any doubt of it; but would he wantonly murder another man to do it?"

"I think, Nick, that we must adhere to the idea of opportunity—to the killing of two birds with one stone. It seems to me that we must start with the idea that the dead man was killed as the result of premeditation, and that you were involved in the affair only because you were there, because the car in which you were a passenger was deserted at the psychological moment, because your room door stood invitingly open——"

"It didn't. I closed it when I went out, to go to dinner."

"Then because the murderer knocked upon it and then opened it to discover if the car really was deserted, and in doing so found a weapon ready at his hand in the rifle barrel in the case on the couch. We must assume that the murderer was waiting there for the man he killed when the latter passed through the car."

"Well, for the sake of the argument let us accept that much, then. Right there we are confronted by another objection."

"What is it?"

"The murdered man had talked briefly with Conductor Graham. He had not said very much, but he had told that he was returning to New York after an absence of four years in Alaska. It isn't supposable that he lied about it, or had reason to do so, and the fact that his clothes came from Seattle, Washington, bears it out."

"Yes. There is the fact also that Ryan was on the same train, and therefore room for the assumption that he was there purposely, because he knew that the stranger was there."

"Why do you stick to Ryan in this matter, commissioner?"

"Chiefly because you so entirely decline to consider him."

"Just what do you mean by that statement?"

"I mean that you confess yourself prejudiced against Ryan, and therefore are unwilling to trust to your own judgment in considering his possible connection with the case."

"Oh!"

"Being rather afraid that you may not be quite fair to Ryan because of your prejudice against him, you are unfair to yourself; and I don't mean to yourself directly, but to yourself professionally. Nobody who knows you thinks for a moment that you killed the man."

"I understand you."

"Well, then, in the face of all that did happen, don't you think it is logical to consider it more probable that Ryan was associated with the case, than any other person on that train?"

"Yes."

"The murderer *was* on that train. You are satisfied in your own mind that he did stay on that train all the way to New York—and yet, one by one, right here and now, name by name, you have eliminated every one of them, Ryan included, in your talk with me. We have gone over the names of all the passengers on that train, and of every member of the crew of it, and we have considered them one by one. A full week has passed, and we have pretty thoroughly looked up the records of each one of those names. What have we discovered?"

"Nothing."

"Nick, are you going to let this mystery beat you?"

"No, I'm not. Not if it takes the balance of my life to clear it up."

"Then, take it from me, begin with Ryan and clear him up first—and don't permit your confessed prejudice against him to influence you to leniency concerning him; for that is precisely what you are doing."

Nick left his chair and stood for a moment with one hand leaning upon the desk.

"There is one thing that should be cleared up before that," he said. "The identity of the man who was killed."

"Yes—if it can be done first, which I doubt. Here are the telegrams from Seattle. The photographs were received there yesterday. There is no trace of him to be found in that clothing house where he bought the suit he wore; nor at the store where he bought the hat. There isn't any clew there, unless it is one that the Seattle police have not been able to find. You might go there yourself."

"That is precisely what I intend to do, commissioner."

"Oh, well; as you please about that. When shall you start?"

"To-night."

"You have pictures, of course."

"Several of the photographs; also some drawings that I have made myself which I have also had photographed. Want to see them?"

"Yes."

Nick passed the package across the desk to the commissioner, who began to examine them with close attention. After a time he looked up, as he returned the package to the detective.

"That is a good idea of yours, Nick, to fix up your drawings with so many different outward appearances. You have got him with whiskers on his face, with mustache and no whiskers, with whiskers and no mustache; I should say that somebody there, or in Alaska, ought to recognize one of those faces, if the man has really ever been to those places."

"My idea was that if he did come from there, he probably wore a beard up to a short time before he left," said Nick. "Well, good-by, commissioner. You won't see me again until I can tell you who this man was, who killed him, and why he was killed."

That same night, at six o'clock, Nick Carter left New York for the West.

CHAPTER VII.

A RINGER FOR ANDY.

But Nick Carter did not stop when he arrived at Seattle, in the State of Washington.

He had telegraphed ahead, and knew that he had barely time to catch a steamer that would take him to Juneau, in Alaska, and that he would be delayed a week or more if he did not connect with it.

Nick had little hope of obtaining anything definite in the way of information at Seattle, which, at best, could only have been a temporary stopping place for the traveler bound for the East.

It was at noontime one day when Nick Carter found himself in the streets of Juneau, and he realized at that moment, more forcibly than ever, how futile the effort he was to make might be.

Here, every man was concerned with his own affairs, giving little heed to the business of others. Such is the creed of the country; and Nick paused before the entrance to one of the "palaces"—for every resort in that country is some sort of a palace—and considered what his first question should be, and of whom he should ask it.

He recalled the fact that the porter of the car in which the unknown stranger had been a passenger, had made several trips to the café car during the day to procure whisky for him, and so he walked into the saloon and approached the bar.

As it happened, there wasn't much doing in the place at the time, and the bartender had leisure at his disposal; moreover, he was inclined to talkativeness.

"Uh huh; sure!" he exclaimed, when Nick invited him to "join him" in something, and asked for a good cigar for himself. "Stranger, eh? Just got in on the *Crown Prince?* She is about the fastest boat that puts in here."

"I suppose that nearly everybody who blows in here from the North, bound for the States, comes into this place to take a drink or two with you, don't they?" Nick asked, by way of beginning the inquiry. He knew that all men in that country are chary about giving out information concerning anybody who has been among them. They look with suspicion upon questions that are too direct, and do not conceal the fact, either.

"Sure thing," was the reply. "That is, unless they've got a grouch against the place. There's always somebody to get up a grouch, you know. Lookin' for somebody?"

"Yes;" and the detective half smiled, purposely giving a half-humorous touch to his remark as he added: "I'm looking up a dead man."

"Hey? Say, we're just out. We don't keep 'em any longer than we have to. They're apt to spoil on our hands; and, to tell you the truth, there ain't as many around nowdays as there used to be—once."

"You have been here a long time, have you?" Nick asked.

"Twelve years, right in this place. Say, what did you mean by that remark about a dead man?"

"Just what I said. There was a man found dead on a railroad train in the States, not long ago, and there wasn't anything about him to tell who he was. He had just told another man that he came from somewhere up here.

"Oh! Are you sure he's dead?"

"Yes."

"What was his name?"

"I don't know. That is what I would like to know."

"What do you want to find out about him for, if he's dead? A dead man don't cut any ice."

"Well, you see, another man killed him."

"Oh; I see; and it's the feller that killed him that you're really after; eh?"

"Both."

"Did the feller that killed him come from here, to?"

"No; I think not."

"Then it was an old grouch, left over from the time the other one left the States."

"I suppose so."

"Well, how are you going to find him if you don't know his name or anything about him, mister? This country is a mighty big place to go huntin' in without any trail to locate your game by, I tell you!"

"I know that. I thought perhaps you could help me. You have been here so long, and you know so many people."

"Maybe so. I know a lot, that's certain. Too many, for that matter. What kind of a lookin' chap was he?"

The detective took a photograph from one of his pockets. He had already arranged them so that he

could take them out one by one, beginning with the first one that had been made of the corpse.

"I've got a picture of him here that was taken the next day after he was killed," he said. "You can see that he was dead, all right, when it was taken."

"Sure thing. N-no; I don't know him. Never saw him, that I know of. Say; is that the wound that killed him, there on the upper part of his forehead? He wasn't shot, eh? Just plain hit on the head with a club."

"With a club that was made of steel, yes. With a rifle barrel, to be exact."

"I didn't know that they carried rifles in the trains with them down in the States, mister. They didn't use to when I was there; not so's you could notice it."

"The rifle barrel belonged to me. It was in a case, which I had left open. It all had the appearance that I had done it."

"Say, partner, look here: were you accused of doing it?" the bartender asked, with sudden interest. "Are you up here just to clear yourself of it?"

"It amounts pretty nearly to that, yes."

"Shake! Shake hard! That's right. I know just how you feel. I was in the same boat myself once. I know all about it. I wish I could help you. I would if I could, and you can bank on that, too."

Nick felt that he had touched the right spot in this man's armor of reticence that had been only too evident, notwithstanding his loquacity of speech. He was sure now of a coadjutor.

"Here is another picture of the dead man," he said, producing the first drawing he had made. "That is photographed from a drawing, as you can see. The wound doesn't show there."

"No. That's better. It's more lifelike. All the same, I don't know him. I can stand here and stare at this picture and make myself believe that I might have seen the man, but that ain't what you want; you want to be cocksure, don't you?"

"Yes. Here is still another picture. Try this one. It is meant to be about as he would have appeared with a mustache."

"Gee whiz! Say! That's almost a ringer for Andy West; only you didn't know Andy West, and it couldn't have been him, because he's been dead, to *my certain* knowledge, 'most three years. Andy was the man I was accused of killing, and him the best and truest friend I ever had. It's right funny, ain't it? This feller sure was a ringer for Andy, all right. Now, what do you think of that? Got any more?"

"Yes; in a moment. It just occurs to me that maybe your friend, Andy, had a brother who looked like him?"

"Sure he had a brother; but I don't know anything about their lookin' alike. Anyhow, Andy's brother cashed in long before he did. His name was Vard. I guess it was Vardiman, or Vardman, but Andy always spoke of him as Vard. Say, you seem to have a large collection of them pictures. Let's have a look in at another one."

CHAPTER VIII.

A GAMBLER'S HUNCH.

"Here are three more," said the detective, producing them. "They are intended to show the same face as it would appear with a full beard; one with it untrimmed, the others having it trimmed in two different ways."

The bartender took the pictures in his hand and looked at them long and intently. Then he laid them all down in a row upon the bar in front of him, nor did he make any comment when Nick added two more to the collection. His loquaciousness was strangely stilled for the time being.

"After a time he shoved all the pictures together in one pile and turned away to the back bar, where he found a half sheet of soiled paper with some figures on one side of it. He brought it to the bar, with a pencil, scratched out the figures, after which he wrote a few words on the opposite side of the paper, folded it, and handed it to Nick.

"Now, stranger, you look here," he said impressively, leaning upon the bar and fixing his eyes searchingly upon Nick Carter's face. "I don't know you and you don't know me; but you've got me interested, and you've got me guessin', too. *And*, I don't know even a little bit what I'm guessin' about, either, except-in' that them pictures look so cussed much like Andy West used to be, that it sure has gone to my stummick. It's the kind of resemblance where you know it ain't the man, and yet it looks like him; see?"

"Yes."

"You see, I know it ain't Andy, because Andy's been cold dead and buried three years come this Thanksgivin' time; and I know it ain't his brother Vard, because Vard's bones are somewhere up in the Pelly River district, where they was left, six months before Andy was shot. Got that, too? Cos I don't want you to make any mistake about that."

"I understand you perfectly."

"Well, all the samee, there's them pictures, and I ain't sayin' that maybe there wasn't somebody else that might have looked like Andy, just because I ain't never heard of one. And you say that this feller was up here; and I know that he could *not* have been up here with that face on him, without his being flagged by somebody for a ringer for Andy West.

"I lied to you when I made out that I didn't see nothin' to recognize in the first picture you showed me, because I knowed it couldn't be Andy; and if it wasn't Andy, I didn't know who it was; but I saw the resemblance right off; and I knowed that it wasn't Andy, anyhow."

"But what is this piece of paper that you have given to me?" Nick asked.

"I'm coming to that in a minute. I started in by saying that I don't know you, and you don't know me. No more do we. But if you'll stop the first man you meet on the pike outside, and ask him about Bob Norman, he'll tell you that Bob is on the level, and al-

ways has been; and, on the other side of the question, I've studied your face and looked into your eyes, and I've made up my mind that you're on the level, too. Maybe you don't exactly savvy what all this has got to do with the present inquiry, but I'll tell you. It has got just this to do with it: I am sending you to somebody with that note I have written, who may be able to tell you something interesting. And, maybe she can't. I don't know. Maybe she don't know nothin' about it, any more than I do; and again maybe she does. She belonged to Andy. Ever since Andy's light went out, she's been livin' in what you might call seclusion; and because there's some people that think yet that it was me put his light out—and she happens to be one of 'em—she keeps herself more secluded from me than from anybody else. Nobody ain't never seen her face outside of her shack since Andy West cashed in, and if I'm sendin' you there to see her, you can bet your newest boots it's because I've sized you up as all wool, and a yard wide."

"But you haven't told me yet why you are sending me there."

"I'm a-comin' to it, stranger."

"My name is Carter."

"All right; mine's Bob; and you've got to put up with listenin' to a little bit of my personal history in order to understand just what you're up against. I ain't been back to the States since I first came up here, because every time I've had a stake that would take me there, I've wanted to double it, and I've lost it all, across the green cloth—only they're mostly bare tables where I play. All this is to tell you that I'm a natural-born gambler; and I'm gamblin' now—on you."

"I don't quite see it; but go on."

"I've got a hunch, and when I get a hunch I play it to the limit. There ain't never no shingles between me an' the sky at a time like that, Carter."

"I understand what you mean, but I do not understand why you mean it, Bob," Nick replied, falling into the easy familiarity of address which the other invited.

"I'm tellin' you. There was always something queer about Andy West; and he didn't take nobody into his confidence any too far; not so's you could notice it. He was nosin' around here, sorta lookin' on at things for a month or two before he made any friends, and I guess I was about the first one he did make. Him and his brother, Vard, had been to Nome, and had gone up the Yukon to Eagle, and then to Dawson, and then into the Pelly River district; and then Vard cashed in, up there, and Andy came down here to Juneau; and all the while *she* had been with 'em, and she came here with Andy."

"But who is the woman?"

"Andy's wife. Name of Dora. Then Andy got himself killed. He was standin' plumb in front ur me when it happened, and they said I shot him—which I didn't. But there's them that thinks I did, yet—and *she's* one of 'em."

He shuffled the photographs between his fingers and spread them out again upon the bar.

"And now comes these here pictures," continued the bartender. "Somebody who's seen Andy and had made a picture of him from mem'ry, might have done it. I don't know. It don't amount to a likeness; it ain't exactly what you'd call a fam'ly resemblance; but the face is a ringer for Andy, allee-samee; so I says to myself, while you're talkin'—an' here's the point: Maybe Dora will know this layout, and again maybe she won't. If she does, maybe she'll see the same thing in this stranger's face—yourn—that I see there, an' lay the cards face up on the table. And so I'm sendin' you to talk with her. See?"

"Where does the hunch come in, Bob?"

"It comes in right where that bullet did that killed Andy. You don't know just where it did come from, but you know it got there. My hunch is that Dora can put you onto the trail you're lookin' for, if she will, and that that trail will carry you into the camp where you'll find out that I ain't the one who shot Andy West.

"I don't know no more why I've got that hunch than you do. I only just know that I've got it. Dora won't see me, or speak to me, or let me see her, because she ain't never got over the notion that I shot Andy; but I guess she knows, way down in her heart, all the time, that I didn't do it; and she lets me send her things once in the while; and—— But you don't care nothin' about all that. You go and see her, and talk with her, that's all."

"When?"

"Right now."

"What shall I say to her?"

"Just give her that message from me, and don't say anything at all until *she* talks."

With all of which Nick Carter had to be contented; and, rather dazed by the uncertainty and complexity of what he had heard, and not at all convinced that it was pertinent to his quest, he went to see the woman.

CHAPTER IX.

A WOMAN OF MYSTERY.

A woman who wore a veil which showed that it had been hastily thrown over her face before she appeared in the doorway, responded to Nick Carter's summons. He raised his hat and gave her the note that Norman had written, without speaking.

"Come inside, please," she said, in a voice that was singularly sweet and low, and which somehow carried with it an assurance of refinement.

She closed the door after him, and bolted it. Then she led him into an amazingly cozy sitting room.

"Be seated," she said; but she remained standing herself, taking a position at the opposite side of an oblong table that occupied the center of the room; and she pulled the drawer of the table partly open and let her right hand drop carelessly into it. It was a significant precaution, suggesting that a weapon of

some sort was ready at her touch. But she added, with perfect composure: "Will you tell me your name?"

"Nick Carter." He gave his name and nothing more.

She caught her breath at the sound of it, and rested for an instant rather heavily upon the hand that touched the edge of the table drawer. Nick could not determine if it was the mention of his name that had caused her to do that.

"Where are you from?" she asked.

"New York."

"When did you arrive?"

"By the *Crown Prince*, that got in this morning."

"Why are you here?"

"I am looking up the identity of a man who is dead, whose name I do not know, but whose likeness I have with me."

"Why have you come to me?"

"I don't know—other than that I was asked to do so."

"You are a detective?"

"Yes."

"Did Bob Norman send for you to come to Juneau?"

"No. I never saw him or heard of him until less than an hour ago."

"Do you know what message this note contains?"

"I do not. He asked me not to read it."

"What did he tell you about Andrew West?"

"Several things, the principal one being that the photographs I have referred to reminded him of Mr. West."

"Did you ever hear of Mr. West before you came here—by that name, or by any other name which associates your information with him now?"

"No."

"Will you permit me to see the photographs to which you have referred?"

"Certainly. Here they are."

She took them in her hand and examined them one after another closely, appearing to forget Nick's presence for the moment; but her right hand was not withdrawn from the table drawer where Nick was sure that it was in contact with a weapon of some sort, although he could not see it; and he did not trouble himself to conjecture why she felt the necessity for such precaution.

She was silent several moments, studying the photographs. Then she spoke again to him through the concealing veil:

"Will you tell me exactly why you are here, in Juneau?"

"Yes. A man was murdered in one of the cars of a train on which I was a passenger. He was killed with an implement that belonged to me, and in the drawing-room of a Pullman that I occupied. His pockets were stripped, his baggage was stolen, it was impossible to identify him. But he had told the Pullman conductor that he was returning from Alaska after an absence of four years. Photographs were made of the dead man; I also made some drawings of him which might look as he appeared if he wore a beard while here. The murderer left no trace. I came to Juneau because it is in Alaska, because it is more accessible than other places in the territory, and because I believed that the chances would be better here than in other places in Alaska, to obtain a trace of the identity of the man who was killed. That is all of it in as few words as possible, madam."

"Were you charged with the crime?"

"No; but I might have been. But that has nothing to do with my presence here."

"What has?"

"My determination to find that murderer."

"Read what Bob Norman has written," she said; and he accepted the note, and read.

"I've got two hunches," it said. "I believe this man is all right, and that you can help him; and I believe if you do help him he will help both of us. Here's asking you to play the limit on both hunches. You want to go back, and I want you to know that I didn't kill Andy. Maybe there ain't anything to this, but I've got a hunch that there is, so tell him what you never would tell me or anybody else. That's the limit I'm asking you to play. BOB."

"What have you to say as to that?" she asked, after he had finished reading the note.

"Nothing—save that I am bewildered. I do not see the association of my affairs with yours. The mere fact that those pictures reminded Bob Norman of your husband, is nothing. One person will notice a likeness where another will not see it at all, and positively deny that it exists. Do you see it?"

"Yes."

"Then there may be something to it. But Bob tells me that your husband has been dead three years, and that his brother, Vardman, died a year before that, or nearly so."

"What do you know about Vardman?"

"Nothing; nor does Bob Norman—apparently."

"May I ask you more intimate questions?"

"Yes."

"Do you suspect anybody of the murder you are trying to clear up?"

"I don't think I understand the drift of that question, madam. The murder happened nearly five thousand miles from here."

"Never mind. Do you suspect anybody?"

"N-no. There was no reason to do so."

"You reply with apparent hesitation, Mr. Carter."

"I did not mean to do so."

"But there is a faint suspicion in your mind against somebody, even though it is not upheld by appearances or logic. There is a man in your mind whom you would suspect if there were the slightest reason for it. Am I right?"

"Yes."

"Will you tell me his name?"

"That would be manifestly unfair—since there is no just reason for suspecting the man."

"I don't know about that. Suppose I tell you that in one sense we are playing at cross-purposes? Suppose I should say to you that I might help you to identify this man whose picture you have shown to me, provided I can find that either one of two names was associated with his death? Suppose, in other words, that the mere mention of a certain name in association with this man would assure me of the fallacy of one doubt that is with me regarding his possible identity?"

"I must repeat, madam, that there is not the slightest reason for suspicion against the man I have in mind. If there is any real suspicion in my mind, it is the result of my own prejudice against the man."

"Tell me his name, then."

"Thaddeus Ryan."

She stood very still, peering at him through the veil, after he had spoken the name. It had been the manner of the request, rather than itself, that called forth his reply. He knew instinctively, when he did answer her, that the name he had uttered was not unfamiliar to her.

Nevertheless, her next remark astounded him. She said calmly:

"Of the two, I would have charged Paul with it."

CHAPTER X.

HOW HISTORY REPEATS ITSELF.

"Of the two brothers, Thaddeus and Paul, I would have charged the latter with such a crime," the woman said, almost repeating her words which had so amazed the detective; and he half smiled as it occurred to him that, after all, Bob Norman's "hunch" might develop into something worth while. He said:

"You know them, then?"

"I have known them," she replied.

"I know them, also, as you have divined. Perhaps you will tell me why you qualify between them, regarding one as more capable of committing crime than the other?"

"Don't misunderstand me, Mr. Carter. Thad Ryan is not less capable of committing a crime than his brother. Quite the contrary. But he is more crafty and subtle. And the other one is——"

"Is now, as it happens, serving a life sentence for the murder of a man named Thomas Ryan—who was no relation to him, however, although the last name is the same. That case should have no relation to this one."

"Pardon me, sir, but I think you will find that it has."

"Do you mean to tell me, madam, that you are familiar with these matters, and with the people connected with them?" Nick asked quickly.

"No. I did not know of the death of Thomas Ryan until you mentioned it just now; but I did know that there was such a man. He married a—a woman whom I once knew; a woman who had been married before and who has a daughter by her first husband. That is correct, isn't it?"

"Yes."

"Cora is a widow—twice a widow now."

"Naturally. You seem to have known her well, since you make use of her given name," said the detective.

"She is my sister," was the calm reply, and all that Nick could think of to say in response to that statement was:

"Oh!"

The woman removed her hand from the open drawer of the table and closed it; then she took a step backward, and, with one sweeping gesture of her right hand, tore away the veil that had hidden her face from view. Nick Carter looked upon her with astonishment that he made no attempt to conceal. He knew instantly who she was, although this was the first time he had ever seen her face or heard her speak. But he had seen many photographs of her, and he had both heard and read a great deal about her, during a time five years ago when she had been much discussed and freely pictured.

It was a mere incident in the life of New York City that this woman who had now revealed herself to Nick Carter in far-off Juneau, should have flashed upon it like a meteor, should have attracted as great attention and as much comment as Halley's comet—and should have been forgotten as quickly; and she had gone out of that life in a spectacular climax to her short career which had filled the newspapers, and the minds of the people of the city with amazement, with wonder.

"You know me, do you not?" she asked.

"Yes, madam," he replied. "I know who you are; or, rather, who you were."

"You understand now why I have kept my face concealed from you, and why I stood there at the table with my hand upon a weapon, prepared to use it, too, if there should be need to do so?"

"Yes; that is, I know why you have thought it necessary to do those things; but I also know that there was no necessity for your precautions. It may not tickle your vanity to know that you have been forgotten; but it is true. Fedora Mortimer, with all her remarkable beauty, with all that she did and left undone, and with all that she appeared to try to do at the climax of her career, has been utterly dismissed from the minds of New York people. You have not been sought after, since your disappearance; you are not sought now. You might walk the streets of New York to-day without recognition save by a very few. None of us is more than an atom in the history of our times."

She stared at him for a moment, breathing heavily and bending a little forward and nearer to him in her eagerness; then she said, with a catch in her utterance:

"But—I—committed a crime."

"Did you? Then the world does not know about it—has yet to learn about it. I am not aware that there is any crime charged against you, unless it is that one of possessing too great beauty, and of misusing it."

"But I shot down and killed——" she paused, wringing her hands together, gazing at the detective beseechingly, as if she would extort from him by the mere power of her will a truth which she feared to face; and in that instant Nick felt a great pity for her, for he understood now what terror she must have lived under during the five years that had passed since the episode to which she had reference.

"I am sorry for you, madam," he said calmly, "if you have lived all this time under such a delusion. Ralph Mortimer was not even seriously wounded, and such wound as he did receive he described as an accident which happened through no fault of yours; and so, you see, you have been living in expiation of a crime that you did not commit."

"But I meant to commit it. I tried to kill him!" she gasped, breathing heavily. The revelation was almost too much for her. All these years she had lived on in the belief that she had taken a life; but now—she started back with a new horror at her heart, hearing only vaguely Nick Carter's next comment, when he said:

"Perhaps, then, after all, there has been some justice in what you have suffered." She paid no attention to what he said. She cried out desperately:

"Do you tell me that Ralph Mortimer is alive? *Alive?* He was my husband; I was his wife. If he is alive, then what am I?"

"At least you are not his murderer, madam. As for the rest, it all depends upon circumstances. Mortimer died a natural death, two weeks after your disappearance—of pneumonia."

She sank down upon a chair that stood near her. She buried her face in her hands and was silent for a long time. When she raised her eyes to him again her features were calm and her gaze was clear and steady, although it was somewhat strained.

"I do not know what you must think of me, Mr. Carter," she said. "It does not matter, I suppose, what you do think. My stage career was as brief as it was brilliant. I was a spoiled creature. I was vain, headstrong, intolerant of restraint. Ralph Mortimer dazzled me; fascinated me; and I married him, in the way I did, before that vast audience at the theater, because I had the whim to do so. But he was a beast, and I speedily found it out. You know the story; why need I repeat it to you?"

"You need not. It has absolutely nothing to do with my presence here."

"Yes, it has. Heaven sent you here to me. A fate that is kinder to me than I deserve, has directed your steps. How small the world is, after all; and how big! During almost five years I have lived in dread of you—of the sound of your name, Nick Carter."

"Why?" he asked.

"Because they told me that you were after me; that I was being sought by you; that one day you would seek me out and take me back there to New York to stand trial for the murder of my husband; and I believed it. That is why the sound of your name, when you uttered it a little while ago, nearly prostrated me—although you did not know it. See! Look here!" She jerked open the table drawer and exposed an automatic pistol. "My hand was resting upon that all the time you were talking to me. At the least indication from you that you intended harm to me, I would have used it. Upon myself. Not upon you. I don't mean that! The living death of believing myself guilty of one crime all these years—the horror of it all—would not have permitted the commission of another one—against another person than myself. But when you told me your name, I was certain that you had come here after me. They had told me so many times that you would do so."

"Who told you?"

She raised her head again to him, quickly.

"James Vardman Westerleigh and his brother, Benjamin Andrew Westerleigh. Do you understand me now?"

"I am beginning to do so."

"It was an easy transition of names for them, to become Vard and Andy West. Was not my name associated with them, or with one of them, when I disappeared?"

"Yes; with Benjamin Westerleigh. It was supposed that you had fled with him; but he reappeared in New York after a short time, and the talk stopped. The body of a woman was taken from the river, much disfigured, but it was identified as yours, and buried as yours. The affair did not interest me. I recall it now only vaguely. You were forgotten by every one as soon as the funeral service was spoken over your supposed remains. I remember now that it was a Mrs. Westerleigh who identified the body that was supposed to be yours, and that she was said to be your sister. Six months ago I made the acquaintance of Mrs. Thomas Ryan, and of her young daughter, Alice. I did not know and have not asked to know Mrs. Ryan's former name. Now, you tell me that she is your sister, and that the two men who died up here as Vard and Andy West were James and Benjamin Westerleigh, of New York—and, pardon me, I assume that one of them was the divorced husband of your sister. Which one, madam?"

"James. The one called Vard West. He had always been kind to me; considerate of me. When Cora divorced him nine years ago, I sympathized with him. He always assumed the part, and acted the part, of a brother to me. When I believed that I had committed mur—a crime, and fled, I communicated with him. He helped me. It was he who sent his brother away with me to protect me. I married Ben—Andy, as he insisted upon being called—in Tacoma, and we went to Nome. Vard followed us there. Then we drifted up the Yukon to Circle, to Eagle, and finally to Dawson, in the Klondike. Then Vard went into

the Pelly River district and was lost there; and Andy and I came here; and then, three years ago, Bob Norman, who was Andy's friend, shot him, to save me from his brutality. At least, I always thought so; but now—now, I am beginning to doubt it. I am beginning to read between the lines. I don't believe that Vard West perished in the Pelly River district. What I do believe is this: That the man you say was killed in the Pullman car was James Vardman Westerleigh; and if I am right about that, I can tell you exactly why Thaddeus Ryan was probably the one who killed him."

CHAPTER XI.

THE MOTIVE OF A CRIME.

"It was a fortunate circumstance that directed you to Bob Norman in making your inquiries, Mr. Carter," Fedora Westerleigh told him, a little later.

"It is all the working out of destiny," she said, with the air of a pronounced fatalist. "But you have not asked me what I meant by my reference to Thaddeus Ryan."

"I am not ready to do that yet. There is another thing to be established first."

"What is that?"

"That Vard West, otherwise James Vardman Westerleigh, did not perish in the Pelly River country. You see, if he did die up there, after all, our case, which now appears so conclusive, will fall flat. I must get to Skagway, and from there to White Horse, and thence into the Pelly River country without delay. I must know that Vard West did *not* perish, as has been supposed."

"And then—then, if you do find that he did not die up there—what?"

"Then I must listen to what you have to tell me about the Ryans—about Thaddeus; and I think it will be necessary that you should return to New York with me; to your sister who mourns you as dead. Don't you agree with me?"

"Yes. I will go. Whenever you are ready, if—if it is necessary."

"That all depends upon what I discover in regard to the supposed death of Vard West. But there are some points which perhaps you can clear up before I start, and"—he looked at his watch—"I have about three hours time."

"What are they, Mr. Carter?"

"Perhaps you can give me a reason why Vard West should have permitted you and his brother to believe him dead when he was not. That is one of them."

Her face flushed crimson, and then became very white before she replied. When she did speak, it was in a low tone that was almost inaudible; and she kept her eyes lowered as she talked.

"Vard—the name comes more naturally to me now than James—was always good to me, and I was fond of him. When my sister divorced him, I sympathized with him and believed in him. I was wrong, but I did not know it, and I would not have believed it. When my own troubles came and I fled, after——"

"Yes, yes; I know. Skip that."

"I communicated with him. He came to me, bringing his brother with him. Andy took me to Tacoma, and left me there. He returned to New York, and two days after he had gone away Vard appeared. I still regarded him as a brother, although he had long been divorced from Cora. But he chose to make love to me. He wanted me to marry him—and to think, now, that all the time he knew that Ralph Mortimer was alive. And the worst of it was, Mr. Carter, that I was fond of him. But he was the divorced husband of my own sister, and I looked with horror upon such an alliance. Then Andy reappeared. He wanted me to marry him, and I consented—to escape Vard. We went from Tacoma to Nome, and Vard followed us. They were forever quarreling—over me. One day there was a violent quarrel, and I took part in it. You see, I hated and despised Andy, and I thought I was fond of Vard. That made me harsh to both of them, but more particularly so to Vard. He disappeared the next day, leaving word that he had gone to the Pelly River country. But there had been blows struck, and I knew that Vard and Andy hated each other. Then came the news—it was a terrible winter; terrible to me, at least—of Vard's death, and Andy finally brought me here. He had become a veritable brute to me. I was afraid that he would kill me in one of his fits of passion; and it was at such a time that he was killed. Bob Norman, who was his friend, rushed in upon us when Andy was beating me, and they fought; they struggled through the open door, and outside of it there was a shot. Andy was killed. A revolver was found upon Bob Norman that held one empty cartridge.

"That is all there is of that part of the story; but it seems to me now, knowing what I do know, that if Vard was not dead, and had returned that night to Juneau, and that if he had come upon the scene at the right time, he might have shot Andy himself, and then, horrified by what he had done, fled back again into the mountains. You see I had been dragged outside on the steps, with them, in the struggle; but I was so nearly insensible from terror at the time that I could not know where the shot came from.

"Now, please let me tell you one more thing—about the connection that I think Thaddeus Ryan might have with this case. Then I will let you go."

"Very well."

"I had many admirers in those days in New York. You know about that. Much was said about me that was not nice, but at the worst I was only a flirt who delighted in the attentions of men. I was never bad at heart, or in fact. I want you to believe that of me."

"I do. Go on, please."

"Thaddeus Ryan was one of those men. He pursued me always, even after I married Ralph Mortimer in that sensational manner, on the stage in a theater, and before an audience. He kept it up afterward; and

once when I repulsed him with scorn he made this remark to me. He said:

"'It is only a step from love to hate, and I am quite capable of taking it. My hate would not be a wholesome thing, Dora. Once you have incurred it, it will never rest.'

"He was on exceedingly friendly terms with James and Benjamin Westerleigh, always. They were what you call chummy. On the Yukon River, long afterward, first one and then the other of the brothers told me that they had given power of attorney to Thaddeus Ryan to manage their affairs for them during their absence; and both were rich men.

"Well, at Nome, and along the Yukon, and in the places where we stayed, they were constantly making investments; and they made money; a great deal of it. They kept up communications with Thaddeus Ryan and with Paul, but I do not think they told that I was with them up here. When Vard died, or was supposed to, Andy sent a long letter to Thaddeus about their business matters; and—don't you see?—if Vard did not die, he must also have communicated with Thaddeus?"

"Yes. I see that very plainly."

"Then Andy was killed. There wasn't any room for doubt of his death. I had Bob send a letter to Thaddeus Ryan about it, inclosing all his papers. I had some property of my own, and I did not want anything to do with Andy's only to rid myself of all thought of it—and I did not want Thaddeus Ryan to know that I was here. That more than all."

"I understand."

"Well, Mr. Carter, if Vard was still alive, but was supposed to be dead by everybody save Thaddeus Ryan, and if Thaddeus Ryan held his power of attorney, and if Vard suddenly wrote to Thaddeus that he was returning to the States, isn't it likely that Thaddeus found himself face to face with two evils, and that he thought only of making selection between them?"

"Go on. Give me your ideas, please."

"James Vardman Westerleigh was returning to New York to confront Thaddeus Ryan, and to call for an accounting of his stewardship. Is it likely, do you think, that Thaddeus would permit him to arrive there, when he was already supposed to be a long time dead, and when, without doubt—at least, in my mind—Thaddeus had already possessed himself of everything that had belonged to those brothers?"

"I think it is extremely unlikely," the detective replied quietly.

"So do I," she said to him. "That is all that I have to tell you. Everything."

"You have made it very clear—provided Vard West did not perish in the Pelly River country."

"I do not believe now that he did."

"Neither do I—now. But if it is a fact that he did not, there must be proof to establish it."

"And you will find it, Mr. Carter."

"I shall certainly make the effort."

"You will go there?"

"Yes. I shall start at once—as soon as I know where to go."

"Bob Norman can tell you more about that than I can—because of his frequent talks with Andy. They were very good friends, always. It was only toward the last, when Bob discovered how Andy ill-treated me, that they quarreled. You will take him with you"

"If he will go."

"He will go with you, I think, when he understands. And he is trustworthy. He has a heart of gold under that rough exterior of his."

He left her then, and hurried back to the Palace, where Bob Norman helped to preside over the refreshments that were provided there; and Bob was ready and waiting to accompany him outside, as he had said he would do.

"Well, you saw her, and she talked with you?" Bob asked, as soon as they were away from the Palace.

"Yes."

"I thought she would, after what I wrote to her. Well, what of it all, Nick?"

"We have agreed together that probably Vard West did not perish, up in the Pelly River country, as has been supposed. We have thought that he was alive, and here in this town at the time when Andy was killed; and if he was——"

"*Say!* If he *was*, why then——" Bob stopped, and the hand that had been raised to descend with a resounding slap upon Nick Carter's shoulder, fell softly; and he continued in a half-hushed tone: "Never mind what then. What are you going to do now?"

"I'm going into the mountains to find out the truth of what became of Vard West, Bob, and you are going with me."

"You bet your life I'm going with you; and that ain't all, either; not by a long shot."

CHAPTER XII.

MURDER WILL OUT.

But it was not necessary for them to go all the way to the Pelly River country, or even half of the distance. "You see," Bob said to Nick Carter, while they were on the train that took them as far as White Horse, "I know by sight almost every old-timer in this part of the country, and there is one old feller in White Horse that more'n likely can tell us something, if there is anything to tell. He's a half-breed; name, Larue. He ain't given' to talkin' much, like me; but he's just the sort of a chap that I think a man like Vard West would ha' taken up with—maybe; if we can find him."

They did not find him, but they discovered his squaw wife and a brood of children that ranged two years apart all the way from babyhood to grown boys, and the eldest of these told Nick that Larue was then more than a week overdue to return to his home.

"He come, bimeby," the youth said placidly; and

added: "Mebby got hurt; mebby dead up there somewhere. Can't tell. Want go find him? Me go with you."

"Yes," replied the detective. "We want to travel up that way, anyhow. How soon can you be ready?"

They were to travel light, and arrangements were quickly made for them to start in an hour; after which Nick and Bob began a tour of the place, asking questions, and seeking information; and, in doing that, Nick permitted himself to be guided almost entirely by the wisdom and experience of Bob Norman.

It was Bob who took the pictures into his possession, and who asked most of the questions, but, although they visited every possible source of information in the place, they met with absolutely no success.

"It doesn't look very promising," Nick said, as they were on their way back to the shack which Larue and his big family called home, although how they all succeeded in crowding themselves inside of it at the same time, was a mystery. Then he stopped short, with his eyes upon the boy who was completing the preliminary arrangements for their journey. "Bob, what makes you think that Larue is the most likely man in this region to know the things we want to find out?" he asked.

"Because he has been around here the longest, and is the most reliable man of the sort I know. If I wanted to pretend that I was dead somewhere up there among the hills, and I had to have a go between to keep me posted, and to run errands for me, and all that sort uh thing, Larue is the man I'd pick out to do it. If I told him something that you wanted to know, and you tried to find out what it was from him, you couldn't get it out uh him with a corkscrew, or with a stick uh dynamite, either. That's why."

"Let me have those photographs a moment, and you wait here."

"What you going to do, Nick?"

"Watch me. How old is that boy?"

"Eighteen or nineteen."

Nick took the pictures in his hand and walked forward alone. He touched the boy on the shoulder, and said:

"Yumashi, I've got something here that I want to show you. Look at this." He showed one of the best of the bearded photographs. "Do you know who it is?"

"Cap'n Jeem," was the placid reply, given at once, and without the slightest hesitation; and he took the picture in his hand wonderingly. Doubtless it was the only photograph he had ever seen.

"Captain Jim—what?" Nick asked quickly.

The boy shook his head.

"Me don't know more'n that. Just Cap'n Jeem."

"Where is he?"

"Heem dead—long time—up there," pointing vaguely toward the northeast. Nick was somewhat dismayed by the information.

"Do you know that he is dead?" he demanded.

"That's what heem say. Heem say heem dead;" placidly.

"Oh! Did he tell you that himself?"

"Ye'."

"When?"

"Lots of times. Heem dead, up there, long time; t'ree, four years."

"But you have seen him?"

"Ye'."

"When did you see him the last time?"

"Month ago, mebby. Heem go away. Stay dead this time.

"Oh; he didn't stay dead all the time before that, did he?"

"No."

"You say he went away a month ago to stay dead. Do you know where his shack was, before he went away?"

"Ye'. Long way off. Five, mebby six, seven hours. We go there."

"Is that where you expect to find Larue, your father?"

"Ye'. Start now. Come on. Git there, mebby, 'fore dark. Long days now."

Of that journey, the least said the better. Nick Carter had experienced some rough ones in his time, but this proved to be far and away the very worst of them all. Nor did they arrive at their destination as soon as the boy had predicted. Many things occurred to detain and delay them, and the stars were shining overhead when they came in sight of the place at last.

It was an exceedingly commodious edifice for that region, for it contained three rooms, and in one of these, when they entered it, they found Larue, the guide. He was on the floor with his back propped against the wall, and he gazed at them when they entered, with eyes that had become almost sightless with approaching death. But he recognized his own son, and also that fact that assistance had come to him, even if it were too late to be of benefit.

"No good," he said, when Nick would have lifted him to the bed that occupied one side of the room. "My back broke. I fell. Dragged myself in here. Yumashi, you be daddy now. Larue's goin' fast. Soon dead." He nodded, or tried to, to Norman, recognizing him dimly through the mist in his eyes.

"We have come to see you about Captain Jim," said Nick, realizing that whatever was said would have to be said quickly; and he went on, assuming that he knew the truth about things, and endeavoring to give the dying half-breed that impression. "His right name was Yard West. You knew that, didn't you?"

"Yes," said Larue. "Heem gone away. Gone to States. Month ago. No come back."

"Say, Larue," Norman interrupted, "was it him that shot Andy West, down at Juneau? I want to know, because they all said I did. You know, don't you?"

"I shot heem, Bob. Cap'n Jeem, he mos' kill me for it, too. But Cap'n Jeem, he raised hees gun t'ree, four times, an' he couldn't shoot. I thought heem

wanted Andy shot, 'cos he'd said lots uh times heem wished heem dead; so I shot heem. Then we came away. But I'd ha' told eef they'd tried to hang you for it, Bob."

"So he did not kill his own brother after all," said Nick. "Thank Heaven for that."

"Yes; and I didn't do it, either, and now you can tell Dora of it, and she'll know it is true. Thank Heaven for that, too, while you're about it."

Larue died that night, but he talked on in his placid way, until almost the last moment, before his light went out forever; and he told Nick a great deal about the life of James Wardman Westleigh; all, in fact, that he needed to know.

Also there were many things found inside the little house, where he had lived ever since his supposed death, which furnished sufficient proof of the story. True, Westleigh had destroyed almost everything of importance that he could not take away with him, but there will always be some things overlooked at such a time; and among these Nick found the scraps of a letter which Westleigh had written to Thaddeus Ryan in New York, and discovered, when he had pasted it together, that it detailed his plans for going back to New York again.

Probably it had been torn up and cast aside because it was too explicit. No doubt the letter that had been sent in place of it was more brief and gave much less general information about the writer; but if this particular letter had been written expressly to fall into the hands of Nick Carter, to supply him with the added information he needed, it could not have been more deftly written.

They buried Larue up there among the hills that he loved, and Yumashi looked on calmly and unmoved while they did so.

Then they started back again.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE PROOFS.

Nearly four weeks later Thaddeus Ryan was standing at the front window of his club, in the city of New York, when two men entered the room and moved across it toward him.

He did not turn his head until one of them touched him gently upon the shoulder, then he wheeled quickly and confronted them.

"The deputy commissioner would like to see you at police headquarters, Mr. Ryan, if you will accommodate him," said one of the men. "He does not find it convenient to come here, and he hoped you would find no objection to going to him. Will you come with us?"

"You are officers, aren't you? What do you want?" Ryan demanded.

"I have told you that."

"What does the commissioner want?"

"He told me to say to you that it was a matter of identification in which he needed your assistance, Mr. Ryan. We have a car at the door. Will you come now, please?"

"I suppose it's a matter of compulsion if I should refuse," replied Ryan, visibly annoyed.

"We were told to take you there, and we generally do what the commissioner orders," was the smiling reply; and somehow that smile reassured Thaddeus Ryan, for he turned away from the window with them, and already having his hat on his head, followed them to the waiting automobile.

But when Thaddeus Ryan entered the office of the deputy commissioner a little later, he stopped suddenly, with his eyes fixed upon Nick Carter, who was seated beside the commissioner's desk.

Nick left the chair upon which he was seated and confronted the man. Then he nodded to Savarin and Latrobe, who had brought him there, and then stepped forward quickly and seized Ryan's arms and held them rigidly.

Ryan struggled to free himself, but could not. Then he shouted out the usual formula in such cases, which is:

"This is an outrage. What do you mean by it?" and much more in the same strain.

"It means," said the detective, "that you are now under arrest for the murder of one James Vardman Westerleigh, otherwise Vard West, and still otherwise, and later, Captain Jim. You will observe that my information is of comparatively late date. You are seized by the arms and held as a precaution against your doing injury to yourself, or to others, during this trying scene. Lieutenant Savarin had a warrent for you in his pocket, which he would have served upon you at the club had you declined to come along without it."

Nick turned to the deputy commissioner.

"I think that is all of my part of it," he said.

"Do you care to make a confession?" the commissioner asked. "It will be better so, and will save a great deal of trouble to all concerned."

"Surely, commissioner, you have not sworn out a warrant against me without some sort of proof of what you charge?" said Ryan, finding his voice, and striving with every impulse he possessed to speak calmly. He even shrugged his shoulders and half smiled, as if the charge against him were too preposterous to argue about.

"Oh, we have ample proof, Ryan," the commissioner replied. "Mr. Carter has been to Juneau, in Alaska, and even into the Canadian Klondike, to a cabin in the hills above White Horse."

"Well what of that? What interest have I got in what——"

"He found there a letter that had lately been written to you here, but which had been withheld in order that another might be sent in place of it. But that letter, written by Vard West, as he was known in that country—by the man you killed in the drawing-room of a Pullman car a few weeks later—described

his anticipated journey eastward, and arranged a meeting between you at a western city."

"Well——"

"Wait one moment. I will do the talking at the present time, because I want to convince you that it will be better to confess your crime, than to compel us to prove it—which we can and will do."

"Go on. I'll talk when you get through."

"Mr. Carter wired me to search the records of the telegraph offices here in New York for messages to you from Westerleigh, and to him from you. We have found several such messages, and we have certified copies of them, and can produce your own originals, if necessary.

"Mr. Carter also suggested other things to this office, while he was on his journey back here. We have followed out those suggestions.

"The registry records at the general post office show that you have sent many registered letters to one Vard West, and to one Captain Jim, during the last three and a half years, which is sufficient proof that you knew James Vardman Westerleigh to be among the living. You did not dare to make use of an assumed name in sending them, because that would have aroused the suspicions of the man you were deceiving.

"There are officials of certain banking institutions here in New York who describe transactions you have had with them in turning over certain properties and moneys to yourself from him; and your power of attorney will not protect you, in the light of his death, and the manner of it, and the certain knowledge that you were a passenger on that train when he was killed.

"It is possible that you may have discovered that your room at the club has been entered and searched while you were out of it, during the last week or so—but I doubt that; it was done much too carefully. But we know what is there, and we have one article that was there, which we have removed, with all its contents. It is rather strange, too, that you should have retained it. I refer to the satchel that the man, returning from Alaska, had with him when you murdered him. The satchel and its contents. I have no doubt that you have examined them, and you know that there is proof sufficient, right there, to send you to the chair.

"But there is still another thing—and others after it.

"The police, in a case like this one, can find ways and means of approaching a safe-deposit box, even. We have done that. If you should go now, to the two that you possess, you would find nothing in them disturbed—but all the same we have a complete list of their contents, and also copies of such papers and letters as we thought necessary. Does that impress you?"

He did not reply. The commissioner went on again:

"There is a lady here whom you once knew. She was able to assist Mr. Carter a great deal in what he has accomplished. Since she arrived here, last evening, she has helped us still more. She has recalled the fact that once upon a time you were an admirer of hers, and that in a burst of confidence you told her of your claims as an artist, and that you kept a studio, 'somewhere down in Greenwich village, that was hidden away in the middle of a block.' We have found that studio, Ryan—and, what is stranger still, we have found there every letter that James and Benjamin Westerleigh wrote to you, and we have found copies of many letters you wrote to them. It is rather surprising that as expert a criminal as you are should preserve incriminating documents. But they all do it."

The commissioner gave a signal. A door opened, and Dora Westerleigh came into the room. Directly behind her came Bob Norman.

But Ryan had only eyes for the woman.

"Alive! Alive?" he half gasped; then he covered his face with his hands, and, while he did so, Cora Ryan and her daughter, Alice, came into the room through the same doorway.

For a moment every person there was silent. Then the commissioner spoke again.

"Well, Ryan?" he asked.

The accused man raised his head. His face had become haggard. He controlled himself only with a great effort. Then he shrugged his shoulders, and a trace of his old insolence returned to him. He addressed Nick Carter.

"What's the use?" he said. "It is all true. You were too much for me, Carter, and I had a crazy notion that I could get you, too. I saw you in that Western city, but I did not know you were aboard the same train with me when I left it until I saw you go into the dining car, and dodged you so that you wouldn't see me.

"I didn't mean to kill Jim, just then. I intended to wait till we got to the city, unless an opportunity should offer; and one did offer. I went back through the train to find Jim, but I looked into that stateroom, in passing it, and saw that it was yours. You had dropped an envelope to the floor that was addressed to you. I picked it up and put it in my pocket.

"Then I saw the open gun case; and just then Jim entered the car at the opposite end of it, and came toward me. It all flashed upon me in an instant then what I would do.

"The car was entirely deserted. There wasn't a soul there. I picked up the rifle barrel and found it to be a likely weapon. I held it behind me and stepped into the doorway. I spoke to Jim, and he recognized me. He followed me into the drawing-room and closed the door after him. Then I struck him.

"That is all.

"I did not encounter anybody, not even a porter, when I entered the car, or when I left it. It didn't take me very long to strip Jim's pockets. He didn't have a great variety of things with him. Then I went back to his seat—I had already located that—and helped myself to his bag. Nobody questioned me.

"Now, commissioner, if you will have somebody draw up a form of confession for me I will sign it."

Alice was sobbing when her mother and Dora led her away. The murdered man had been her father, after all, and she had loved him in her childhood.

THE END.

"Jack Dreen's Secret; or, Nick Carter's Imitation Picture Puzzle," is the title of the story that will be found in the next issue of this weekly. The story opens with the shooting of Bob Norton on the stoop of Nick Carter's residence, in Madison Avenue, New York. The finding of the person who made the effort to kill Norton, and the motive which prompted the attempted murder, prove to be a tangled skein which takes all of Nick Carter's wit to unravel. To follow the great detective's methods in solving the mysteries narrated in this story will prove absorbing reading for you. The issue is No. 15, and it will be out December 21st.

THE MAN AND THE HOUR;

Or, Sheridan Keene's Clever Artifice.

By ALDEN F. BRADSHAW.

CHAPTER X.

UNDER THE SURFACE.

Sheridan Keene at once returned to the parlor. The coroner was still addressing the jury, but he turned when the detective entered, and almost immediately concluded his remarks. The effort of the inquest was apparent in the face of nearly every person in the room. Of the entire gathering there was hardly a man who doubted that Robert Jeffrey was guilty of having murdered Jacob Moore the previous Tuesday night.

Sheridan Keene resumed his seat near the table, and the coroner drew his own chair nearer that of the detective. A subdued conference ensued between the two, during which the great crowd in the room and about the doors watched them with curious gaze, and wondered what it all was about. Yet scarce a sound broke the impressive silence.

Richard Thorpe still maintained his outward composure, and, though some of the color had vanished from his face, he appeared to take only that same cursory interest in the proceedings. To the bowed man a few feet away, a man crushed, despite himself, by the awful calamity befallen him, Thorpe gave not the slightest attention.

Presently the voice of the coroner again broke the silence.

"As I observed in the beginning," he said gravely, with his gaze reverting to the jury, "the object of this inquest is to discover the facts bearing upon the crime, and that mere methods are of secondary importance. In the interests of justice, and of all concerned, I shall grant the solicitor of the deceased the privilege of asking a few questions. Mr. French, who is the witness?"

The lawyer, who appeared a little doubtful and perplexed, turned and replied gravely:

"My assistant, Mr. Keene, is here. Will you kindly give the privilege to him?"

The coroner looked inquiringly at the detective.

"I would like to ask Mr. Thorpe a few questions, sir," said Sheridan Keene, "if that gentleman has no objections."

"None at all," called Richard Thorpe, who immediately came forward.

But many there noticed and remarked it later that he was unusually pale and his knees trembled.

With an expression of grave austerity on his attractive face, Sheridan Keene rose to his feet and remained standing beside the coroner's table. Every eye in the room was upon him, but his were fixed upon the face of Richard Thorpe.

"I wish merely to verify, for my own satisfaction, some of the testimony which you have given," he said, in a slow, effective way. "No doubt you can help me."

"I will do so, if I can," Thorpe answered; yet he evaded the eyes that were so steadily searching his.

"I understand from Jenks, of the turnpike tavern, that you occasionally talked with Mr. Darbage when he at first appeared there. Is that true?"

"I think so," was the reply, after a moment. "I have a faint recollection of seeing him there about a year ago."

"That was about the time your uncle wanted you to marry Mabel Moore, was it not?"

"Yes," exclaimed Thorpe, with a change of countenance. "But what has that to do with this affair?"

"I don't imply that it has anything to do with it," replied Keene shortly. "But it establishes the time when Darbage first appeared in this locality. Of course you, Mr. Thorpe, had no previous acquaintance with Darbage?"

"Certainly not," cried Thorpe resentfully; but the expression upon his face was drawing the attention of all present.

"Did you in any way influence Mr. Moore to employ Darbage?"

"No, I did not! Your questions have the nature of insinuations, sir."

"Pray, don't misconstrue them," said Keene. "That might operate to your disadvantage. I am trying to establish absolute facts."

"Well, don't imply that I knew Darbage before he came here, for I did not."

If Sheridan Keene was seeking to disturb the witness and perhaps confuse him, he was succeedingly admirably.

"I don't say you did know him," Keene went on. "He was here most of Tuesday evening, however, as he just testified. Don't you think, Mr. Thorpe, that it is a curious fact that the person who called on Jacob Moore, if the facts are as Mrs. Haynie testified, was so careful as to secure the damaged latch of the door on leaving Moore's chamber?"

"What do you imply by that?" replied Thorpe, with a sneer.

"Merely this—if the criminal was not as careful as I suggest, then Moore might have been killed before Mrs. Haynie closed the door. That is all."

"And that is all very significant," cried Thorpe, who was trembling visibly. "But I don't care to have remarks of this kind addressed directly to me, sir. I am here to answer questions, if you have any to ask, not to be made the subject of insinuating observations."

Keene's voice fell lower, and became somewhat severe.

"I will confine myself to questions, in that case, Mr. Thorpe," he rejoined, in a way that startled all observers. "You testified that your horse was ill for a week previous to Moore's death. Was she in the stable here, or in Boston?"

"She was here."

"And had not been out for a week?"

"No."

"You are positive of that?"

'Of course I am. She was too sick to be ridden."

"Too sick to have left the stable?"

"Yes, yes! why do you press me with these questions?" demanded Thorpe, with increased impatience.

"Because you rode her on the night in question," Keene said shortly.

"That was the only time in a week. She had improved, and needed exercise."

"So you rode up to Malden and thence to the tavern."

"I have testified to that."

"May not some other person have ridden your horse during the week?"

"I allow no other person to ride her, sir."

"Then you are positive that she was ridden only by yourself, and at the time stated, sir? I have here a copy of the shoe now on your horse," cried Sheridan Keene, with forceful rapidity. "Through a gap in the hedge, and over meadows below here, I find corresponding imprints in the soil. Evidently your horse was ridden straight from here to the tavern. How do you explain that?"

It would be impossible to describe the excitement from that moment until the culminating tragedy of that sensational afternoon.

Thorpe reeled as if he had been struck a blow, and Bob Jeffrey rose from his chair. But the coroner brought his clenched hand down upon the table, and checked all interruptions.

"The impressions in the soil may have been made at some previous time," cried Thorpe, shaking with fear, and now seeing only too plainly the purpose of his relentless questioner.

"Not so!" cried Keene forcibly. "For the storm of Tuesday would have destroyed them, as the coroner has stated in a similar instance."

"I don't know, then!" Thorpe cried desperately. "I don't know when they were made. I don't know when——"

"Well, never mind, then, just now," Keene said sharply. "There is one other matter upon which I wish to be enlightened. You testified that it was precisely eight o'clock when you called at the house of Mrs. Jeffrey."

"And so it was!" cried Thorpe, with his gray lips twitching convulsively. "So it was, precisely eight o'clock."

"Mr. Thorpe," and Sheridan Keene drew himself up with added sternness, "Mabel Jeffrey set her dining-room clock at noon Sunday last. I have been there and examined the timepiece. The clock stopped, or it was stopped, when the obstruction was introduced among the works. The hands on the dial pointed to the hour of twelve. The weight operating the mechanism was still partially wound."

"Well, what's all that to me?" cried Thorpe, scarcely able to govern his voice.

Sheridan Keene continued, without a change in tone or manner:

"Mr. Thorpe, on the woodwork I marked the exact position of the weight which runs the hands. I then wound the clock, removed the pendulum, and permitted the weight to fall. Mr. Thorpe, when the weight had reached the mark which I had made, what time should it have been by the dial?"

Thorpe hesitated for an instant, and then exclaimed hoarsely:

"It should have been twelve o'clock!"

"It was exactly eight o'clock, Mr. Thorpe," said Keene, with terrible significance.

A half-suppressed cry of fury came from Thorpe's lips, and he sprang forward, with both hands extended.

"What do you mean! What do you mean, that you dare——"

"I mean that I have established the man and the hour! I mean——"

"Who are you! Who are you, that you come here as a lawyer, yet now accuse——"

"You have accused yourself, Richard Thorpe!" thundered Keene, with indescribable severity. "I am not a lawyer! I am Sheridan Keene, of the Boston inspectors—and you are the man who murdered Jacob Moore!"

Amid the frightful excitement that followed, some saw Richard Thorpe wildly fumbling in the pocket of his vest, and then thrust something between his lips. The next instant he fell like a log to the floor, at the very feet of the man whom he had aimed to ruin, and the one man who had read him aright.

Bob Jeffrey started up, with face transfigured.

"Good God!" he cried. "The man has killed himself!"

"Cyanide of potassium!" exclaimed Detective Keene, bending over the prostrate form on the floor, and instantly detecting the pungent odor of the fatal drug.

"Ah, well, Jeffrey," he added, looking up, "he has saved the sheriff a disagreeable job."

CHAPTER XI.

CONCLUSION.

"No, Chief Watts, it was not a very blind case," said Detective Keene, a few days later, as he sat alone with the chief inspector, to whom he had reported all of the particulars.

"The very nature of the crime, and the peculiar circumstances under which it had been committed, were very significant," he continued. "It looked from the first as if Thorpe had taken advantage of Jeffrey's outspoken resentment, and of Moore's antipathy, to commit the deed and then involve Mabel's innocent husband in the crime."

"I see."

"If that were so, it became only a matter of sifting down the actual circumstances, and placing the guilt where it belonged."

"Not always an easy task, Keene," smiled Chief Watts, with a nod.

"No, not always, chief. But in this case I had considerable help of a superficial kind, from Constable Bragg. He is a hustler, that Bragg, and by following him about closely, I secured most of the naked evidence. But," added Keene, laughing, "he has no head for going below the surface of things."

"Evidently not."

"I seized upon the evidence he unearthed, however, and soon had the ribbons well in hand. It then became only a matter of suddenly driving Thorpe into such a

corner that he would betray himself, which was not a very difficult task."

"Do you know if he had learned about the will Moore had made?" asked the chief.

"Yes, he had," nodded Sheridan Keene. "Now that he is under arrest, Darbage states that Thorpe had heard Moore muttering about the will, when he believed himself to be alone, and that Thorpe then resolved to do away with him before anything should occur to alter Moore's intentions. He knew the latter could not be persuaded to forgive his daughter, unless, possibly, when on his deathbed, so Thorpe struck while the situation was in his favor."

"And the property."

"Now goes legally to Mabel Jeffrey."

"I see. Who is this man Darbage? Do you know?"

"Not yet, Chief Watts, but I think it will appear later. We easily can convict him of having been an accessory in the crime."

"Oh, no doubt of it."

"According to Darbage," continued the detective, "it seems that Thorpe ran across him here in town, and sent him down to the tavern until he could plan to have him employed at Moore's, where he wanted him in the capacity of a spy. This occurred about the time Moore was trying to effect the marriage, and Thorpe, who was in town much of the time, desired to ascertain Mabel's precise feelings, and just what chances he could safely take to secure Moore's favor. He found he could safely agree to marry the girl, and, when she peremptorily refused to consider the project, it resulted in Moore's disowning her—the very thing for which Thorpe had hoped."

Chief Watts nodded understandingly.

"On the night Darbage came to blows with Jeffrey at the tavern, when the latter drew his knife, Darbage noticed where he replaced it, and later secured it unobserved. When Thorpe was told of the fact, he took the knife himself."

"Very cunning! He already was planning the crime."

"Not a doubt of it."

"Just how was it wrought out?"

"Oh, it was very well done, Chief Watts, as Darbage states it. On the night of the crime Thorpe mounted his horse and rode away from the house. He already knew that Mrs. Haynie was going away for a time, and probably he laid all his plans accordingly. The involving of Jeffrey, however, was not included in them at that time, and resulted purely from accident."

"Naturally," bowed Chief Watts.

"A short time after riding away, and after Mrs. Haynie had departed, Thorpe returned to the house, and secured his horse outside the stable."

"This is what Darbage tells?" inquired the chief.

"And I am inclined to think it is the truth," replied Sheridan Keene, who had questioned the groom closely since his imprisonment. "Thorpe," he continued, "then entered the house and went to Moore's chamber, where he made a request for money, despite that Moore was then in bed. An altercation ensued, part of which Darbage overheard from the kitchen. Startled by a cry for help, Darbage ran upstairs, and found Moore bleeding in bed, stabbed as stated. Within a few minutes he was dead."

"A terrible affair, indeed."

"Darbage states that his first impulse was to reveal the whole truth, but, by the promise of money, Thorpe bought him to secrecy, and together they set to work to devise some scheme for averting suspicion."

"They did pretty well, at that, in the limited time they had," smiled Chief Watts.

"So they did," assented the detective. "It was the groom's idea, that of secreting the documents in Jeffrey's house, that were taken from Moore's desk."

"It strikes me that Jeffrey selected a strange place in which to hide them," observed Chief Watts.

"In the clock! Yes, it was strange, in a way; but he was compelled to accomplish his object when Mabel was not present, and he took the opportunity when she went to the door with Mrs. Haynie. His object being to throw suspicion upon Jeffrey, he slipped the package into the upper part of the tall case, that part containing the works. He then stopped the clock, setting the hands at twelve, probably thinking it would be assumed that Jeffrey had returned subsequently to his own visit, and that the obstruction was placed there by him, and had stopped the clock. The scheme would have worked against such a man as Bragg, but not against your humble servant," laughed Sheridan Keene.

Chief Watts smiled approvingly.

"Don't you think Thorpe took rather a long chance?" he asked quietly. "Suppose Mrs. Jeffrey were to have noticed that the clock had stopped before her husband returned."

"Ah, but Thorpe made sure that that would not be likely to occur. He took the woman into the sitting room, after Mrs. Haynie's departure, and later suggested that they should go out and seek for her husband.

"Furthermore, had Mrs. Jeffrey noticed the time, on her return, she would have assumed that the clock had accidentally stopped, and merely would have started it again, without making an examination of the works. In any case, you see, the package was bound to be found there, and naturally would incriminate the man intended."

"But for the discernment of a clever officer," smiled the chief. "What was Darbage doing, meantime?"

"He saw Jeffrey outside the house, and took advantage of the circumstances," Keene explained.

"Having extinguished the light in the fatal room, he watched Jeffrey attempt to look into the window, and also heard him enter the kitchen. Evidently Jeffrey suspected Moore was alone, and was at intervals determined to see him. When he finally tried the front door, Darbage made his own presence known, and took occasion to moisten his hand with the blood of the dead man, and to stain Jeffrey's coat sleeve with it, when he thrust him from the steps."

"Ah, I see!"

"Then Darbage, who is an artful dog, fixed things to involve Jeffrey. He followed him out beyond the barn and struck him with a slung shot, with the intention of detaining him near the house so that he would come under suspicion. Then he tossed away the knife Thorpe had used, where it was likely to be found, and went to the tavern. Next morning he and Thorpe had their infamous design well in mind, and there's the case in a nutshell."

Chief Watts bowed gravely, and consulted his watch.

"It was one of those tragedies which at times result from family dissension," he observed gravely. "I am glad that Jeffrey and his wife get what belongs to them;

and that, for the sake of one man, you were successful in your efforts."

"What man is that, Chief Watts?"

"Lawyer French, who requested me to loan him a competent officer. He now thinks there is no detective who is the peer of Sheridan Keene. Don't blush, Inspector Keene! He is more than half right."

THE END.

WHO WAS THE MODEL?

Or, Missing: A Beautiful Heiress.

By ALDEN F. BRADSHAW.

CHAPTER I.

CHIEF WATTS' VISITORS.

"Is Chief Watts in his office?"

"Yes, sir."

"Engaged?"

"I believe he is, sir, just at this moment."

The scene was the general office of the inspectors of police, in the headquarters building in Pemberton Square, in the city of Boston. It was on a morning in December, one of those pleasant winter mornings when mankind in general is glad to be alive.

The terse inquiries above came from an imposing man in the uniform of a superior officer of the municipal police, the superintendent himself. He had just come down the narrow stairway which joins the inspectors' quarters with the extensive main offices of the police department, and his grave countenance and serious manner indicated a matter of unusual importance.

"Let me know at once when he is disengaged," he said shortly, to the clerk who had responded to his questions, and, turning sharply about, he returned by the way he had come.

The clerk ventured sending in word to the chief, and the delay which less interest might have occasioned was thereby obviated. It was not more than ten minutes later when the superintendent again appeared, and immediately strode through the corridor leading to the private office of Chief Inspector Watts.

On this occasion, however, he was accompanied by two men. One was young, less than thirty, and rather pale and effeminate looking, with a plain, unattractive face, the main features of which indicated weakness of character and a mind easily influenced, whether to good or to evil. He was clad in a neat business suit, evidently nearly new, and a topcoat, and his general appearance, whatever his face may have suggested to one versed in physiognomy, was that of a young man of education and refinement, if not of considerable means.

The other was an elderly gentleman of seventy years, with gray hair and a refined and aristocratic countenance. He wore, over a dark broadcloth suit, a black overcoat with a cape, and his appearance was that of a clergyman, which, in fact, he was.

His step was tremulous as he followed the superintendent of police through the dim corridor, and was in vivid contrast with that of the latter, while his manner was one of subdued distress, as if no ordinary mission had brought him there that soft December morning.

The superintendent immediately ushered his two companions into the room, closing the door behind them. The chief, with an eye quick to read external appearances, instantly surmised something serious, and he rose to his feet to meet them.

"Good morning, Superintendent Eldredge," he said gravely, with a mere glance at the others.

"Good morning, chief," was the reply, with a nod. "This is Reverend Doctor Lawton, the late rector of St. Vincent's."

"Glad to meet you, Doctor Lawton. I know you well by name."

"And this is Mr. Wade, a friend, who is engaged to marry the doctor's niece. Take a chair, Doctor Lawton. The doctor is in great distress, Chief Watts, and I think the situation may be one requiring your investigation. The doctor's niece, a girl of twenty, is mysteriously missing."

"Since when?" inquired Chief Watts, waving Wade to a chair. "I am very sorry to hear it."

"Since day before yesterday," explained the superintendent. "Not a long time, I admit, yet some of the circumstances, as the doctor has stated them to me, indicate that all is not right. I rather think the girl may possibly have been abducted."

"I am sure of it, Chief Watts—sure of it," interposed Doctor Lawton, with distressful fervor. "Either abducted or worse! Tillie never was absent before in any such way as this, and I am absolutely certain that some serious misfortune has befallen her."

"Let me know all of the particulars, Doctor Lawton," Chief Watts now said, resuming his seat. "If they indicate a case of abduction, I will have one of my inspectors investigate the matter at once. As you go out, superintendent," he added, as the latter turned toward the door, "will you ask the clerk to send Detective Keene in here?"

"Certainly."

"We will wait until Inspector Keene comes in. If it becomes necessary, I will detail him to look into the case, in event of which I now wish him to hear your story."

"But every moment of delay, sir——"

"Pardon me, doctor," interposed the chief gravely, checking the old gentleman's protest, which was born of an anxiety which he could not suppress. "Haste in detective work is never advisable. If your niece has been abducted, or if any more serious fate has befallen her, the truth can be discovered only by careful and systematic work. Don't think me disinterested, for I will do all in my power to help you, but I must do it in my own way."

"Oh, I already feel sure of your interest, Chief Watts," returned the clergyman, striving to govern his nervousness. "But my anxiety at times is greater than I can bear."

"Let me give you one word of encouragement," said Chief Watts kindly. "Scarce a day passes, sir, that in one locality or another, some person is not reported lost, dead, or abducted. Of the entire number, only a very small percentage are the victims of crime, or of any serious misfortune."

"But that small percentage!" exclaimed Doctor Lawton, with his pale features a picture of apprehension and dismay. "Think of the murders committed, the terrible crimes that are perpetrated, the frightful out-

rages with which the daily papers are constantly filled. Under the circumstances, I cannot but fear the very worst."

"I now will consider those circumstances, doctor," Chief Watts bowed; "for here is Inspector Keene."

The clergyman looked up at the young man who entered, and both he and young Mr. Wade bowed in acknowledgment of Chief Watts' introduction; but neither appeared in a state of mind to calmly suffer delay.

"Sit down, Detective Keene," said Chief Watts, with a glance at a chair. "I may detail you on a case of possible abduction, and I wish you to hear Doctor Lawton's statements. Now, doctor, what about this girl?"

The chief's change of manner rather surprised the clergyman, it was so businesslike. He looked up quickly and caught the glint of the chief's blue eyes, and instantly became aware that he had underestimated the energy and power of his questioner. But the change was to his liking.

"She is my niece, and her name is Matilda Mason," he hastened to reply. "We call her Tillie, for short."

"A daughter of your wife's brother?"

"Yes, sir; and an only child. She is an orphan, moreover, and has lived with me since she was ten years of age, and is like a daughter to me."

"Then you are well informed of her character and habits?"

"Indeed, yes! A sweeter and more virtuous girl never lived. She has been carefully reared and educated, and has always been a model of gentleness and refinement."

"Now tell me why you are so anxious about her," said Chief Watts, with a significant glance in the direction of Sheridan Keene.

"Because she is mysteriously missing from her home," said Doctor Lawton, speaking hurriedly in his agitation. "She went away day before yesterday evening, without even intimating her intentions, and has not returned. Such conduct on her part is unprecedented. She invariably has been a very dutiful and considerate girl. She fairly worships her aunt, my wife, and would not willingly have caused her such anxiety and distress by a voluntary disappearance of this kind. My wife is almost distracted."

"I can vouch for all this," interposed Mr. Wade, speaking with some eagerness. "Tillie Mason is a girl who would not voluntarily have committed this indiscretion."

Sheridan Keene glanced across at the pale, effeminate face of the speaker, and did not quite fancy the expression of the young man's insipid blue eyes; but the thought that rose in his mind was dispelled by Chief Watts, who turned his chair nearer that of the clergyman, and demanded shortly:

"Has your niece, Tillie Mason, any other relatives here in town or in the suburbs?"

"Only a cousin, who lives in Providence."

"Does she ever visit her?"

"The cousin is a gentleman, sir," replied Doctor Lawton, gravely shaking his head. "I have telegraphed to Providence, and Tillie has not been seen there."

"Did the cousin send you a wire personally?"

"He did so at once, Chief Watts."

"Has Miss Mason ever been to any college or seminary?"

"Yes; she went two years to Vassar."

"Did she make any intimate friends while there, whom she may have visited at this time, and without having informed you of her intention?"

"She made friends, no doubt, but I cannot for a moment believe she left home to visit any of them," replied the clergyman, with grave decision. She certainly would have informed me of her intention, or if unexpectedly detained from home she surely would have written or telegraphed, if some extraordinary occasion had not prevented. Moreover, sir, she did not take away with her any clothing or garments except those she wore."

"At what time did she leave home?"

"About half past seven Tuesday evening."

"Who was at your house when she left?"

"Only my wife and myself. Including my niece, we are the entire family. I have no children."

"Did you see her shortly before she went?"

"I did, sir," bowed Doctor Lawton, whose anxious eyes steadily met the grave face of his questioner, as if he there would seek some encouraging sign. "I was seated with my wife in the library. Tillie came to the door with her things on, and said she was going out for a time. It is not unusual for her to do so on pleasant evenings, and I merely bowed to her over my newspaper. That was the last time I saw her, sir."

The voice of the aged speaker choked over the last sorrowful words, and his anxious eyes swam with welling tears. He drew forth a silk handkerchief and dried them, but Sheridan Keene could see that he was softly sobbing back of the snowy folds.

Chief Watts began to think there might be something more in the case then mere impulsive apprehension and misgivings. The character of Miss Mason, as described by her uncle, whose integrity and discernment were worthy of consideration, was not that of a wild or impulsive girl, who might be given to doubtful escapades and the conventional duplicity which attaches thereto.

CHAPTER II.

CRIME OR ACCIDENT?

Having established this much to his satisfaction, Chief Watts decided he would detail Sheridan Keene upon the case, and he immediately turned his inquiries more directly upon a line important to detective work pure and simple.

"Have you made any publication of the fact that your niece is missing, Doctor Lawton?" he asked, "through the press or any other channel?"

"No, sir, I have not," was the tremulous reply. "I wish, if possible, to avoid publicity, at least until it becomes absolutely necessary."

"Why so?" demanded Chief Watts. "Surely you have no less faith in Miss Mason's honesty and virtue than you have here expressed? For no other reason than that of her own character should you demur from making public the fact of her mysterious absence. Why do you not publish the precise facts in the columns of the daily papers?"

"Because, Chief Watts," cried the clergyman, with a sudden outburst of fervor; "I feel here in my own heart that the public cannot help me in this distressing hour. I am already satisfied that Tillie has not voluntarily left home, and that she is being prevented from returning, or even communicating with us. If this is so, the public cannot help her or me; and I now sup-

press the facts only to spare her needless notoriety should she be safely restored to me, which God speed!"

"Well, there is something in that," admitted Chief Watts, with a genuine appreciation of the clergyman's motives. "I will do what I can for you, Doctor Lawton, since you wish to withhold the facts from the public at present. I will detail Detective Keene upon the case, and he will investigate it. Now answer me a few questions."

"I thank you very much for your interest, chief," bowed Doctor Lawton, with manifest gratitude. "I will answer any questions to the best of my knowledge."

"Is Miss Mason a pretty girl?"

"Very, sir. She is always noticed because of her beauty."

"Light or dark?"

"Medium, sir, with brown hair and eyes."

"Her figure?"

"About the ordinary size, I think, sir; yet——"

"Oh, she is larger than the ordinary, my dear doctor," young Mr. Wade interposed, with much interest and feeling. "She is a very beautiful girl, Chief Watts, and her figure is strikingly perfect. I have heard Tillie say that, when at Vassar and in practice in the gymnasium, her measurements and proportions were very near the classical model."

"Then, Mr. Wade, she is a woman who might attract the attention of evil-minded men, you think?" inquired Chief Watts.

"I know that she always attracts attention," replied Wade.

"Is she inclined to personal display? By that I mean, does she enjoy drawing men's attention to her?"

"Oh, no, sir; far from it," cried Doctor Lawton, with fervent assurance. "Tillie is modesty itself."

"Doctor Lawton is right in that," supplemented Wade, with a corroborative bow.

Chief Watts accepted their testimony, yet he made a slight sign to Sheridan Keene.

"Now, Doctor Lawton," he continued, "where is your residence?"

"On Beacon Street, near the Bay State Road."

"And Miss Mason left there at half past seven Tuesday evening?"

"Within a few minutes of that hour, sir."

"How was she dressed?"

"In a blue cloth suit with a mink cape."

"Was that the suit she wore at dinner that evening?"

"Yes, sir."

"Then on leaving home she evidently had not changed her dress for any special occasion?"

"I am sure she had not."

"Her hat?"

"She wore a hat of red velvet, with a rim of navy blue beneath."

"Did she habitually wear jewelry that would attract attention?"

"She wore next to none, sir. She is not fond of jewelry."

"What have her habits been when at home, Doctor Lawton? Has she any special employment?"

"Not as a vocation, sir, for she is an heiress and worth considerable in her own name. She maintains some of her studies, however, and is very fond of music and the arts. She is a girl of considerable culture, sir."

"You say she is fond of the arts? Does she paint?"

"No, sir; but she sketches very nicely."

"Does she take music lessons?"

"Yes, sir; once a week."

"From a teacher at home or elsewhere?"

"She goes to the conservatory, sir."

"Has she any other duties that take her regularly from the house, and in one direction?"

"None, sir," replied Doctor Lawton, wondering why these questions were of material importance.

But Chief Watts left him to wonder. That they were of importance may safely be assumed, or Chief Watts would not have asked them.

"You say," he continued, "that your niece is wealthy? Is her wealth inherited from her parents, one or both?"

"From her father. He left Tillie several hundred thousand dollars."

"In trust?"

"Yes, sir. The trustee is Judge Gibbons, of the superior court."

"Are there any relatives who might have been disappointed because of this legacy?"

"None, sir. Mr. Mason's will was probated ten years ago."

"We will come down to something more recent," nodded the chief. "I shall detain you only a few moments longer. Has Miss Mason many gentlemen friends?"

"She has many friends, sir, both ladies and gentlemen," said the clergyman gravely, "but none with whom she is especially intimate. There is a tacit understanding that she will some time in the near future marry this gentleman here, Mr. Wade, but the engagement has not yet been announced."

"Then, Doctor Lawton," said Chief Watts slowly, "you absolutely know of no possible occasion or person to which or whom this mysterious disappearance of your niece could be reasonably attributed?"

"I do not, Chief Watts," said the clergyman, with grave sincerity. "I am in darkness as great as my distress. I would give all I possess to have Tillie restored to my arms, for I love her as a daughter. I beg that you will leave no stone unturned to find her, and that you will spare no expense to that end."

"What have you done in the matter before coming to me?"

"I waited until yesterday morning, hoping the mail would bring some word from my niece," explained Doctor Lawton. "When I received none, I wired to Providence, also to two of Tillie's college friends. In response to those messages I received only negative replies. Meantime, I consulted Mr. Wade, thinking Tillie might possibly be with him, and also visited several of the neighbors."

"All of which was in vain," said Mr. Wade sadly. "As for me, I have not seen Tillie since Sunday evening. I called to see her last night."

"The case seems to be rather a curious one," observed Chief Watts, turning now to Sheridan Keene. "I think you had better look into it, and see what you can learn."

"Very well, chief," bowed the detective.

"I presume, Doctor Lawton, you have a photograph of Miss Mason."

"Yes, sir; several of them."

"With you?"

"Unfortunately they are at home. I was so anxious this morning that I started out early and sought Mr. Wade. I did not even think of coming here, or I should

have brought a photograph. It was Mr. Wade's suggestion that I should appeal to the police for aid."

"I see," nodded Chief Watts.

"Will it not be well, chief," said Keene, in an undertone; "if I go up to the doctor's house and see what I can observe there?"

"Yes, I think so," he replied. "You then can get one of the pictures. Also have a talk aside with the doctor's wife. Women sometimes make confidants of women, you know."

"I understand."

Chief Watts turned to his visitors, then rose to his feet.

"Detective Keene will go home with you, Doctor Lawton, and look at the photograph of Miss Mason," he explained gravely. "You had better go at once, and he will proceed upon the case without delay. His reports will come to me, and I will lend him what aid I can."

"Thank you, Chief Watts!" exclaimed Doctor Lawton, with gratitude. "You will spare no expense to find this missing girl?"

"I will do all in my power, I assure you," bowed the chief.

Doctor Lawton turned to his younger companion.

"Will you go with me, Ben, or must you now go to your business?" he asked, with a voice that never for a moment lost its tremor of anxiety.

"With you! With you, doctor!" Wade hurriedly exclaimed. "I could not think of leaving you before Tillie has been restored to us. I am by far too anxious to even think of business. I am going with you, doctor."

"Very well."

"And I beg of you, Chief Watts, and you, Detective Keene, to command me in any way possible."

"I will bear it in mind, Mr. Wade," replied Sheridan Keene, with a nod of approval. "Very likely you will be able to assist me in some way."

"Don't fail to command me, then."

The detective bowed again.

"Come, then," he said quickly. "We will take a carriage in the square."

TO BE CONTINUED.

THEY LAUGHED.

By MAX ADELER.

Peter Lamb considers himself a pretty fair singer, and especially does he pride himself upon his way of giving a comic song. A few nights ago he was invited to a little evening party to Judge Pitman's, and as he hadn't any clean shirts home from the wash, he put a false bosom over his red flannel undershirt, pinned his collar to the latter, and went to the party looking as well as anybody. About the middle of the evening Mrs. Pitman asked him to sing something, and Peter, taking his stand by the piano, and facing the audience, tuned up and struck out into the famous old comic song of "Lord Lovell." Just as he began, the string which held the false-shirt bosom around his neck came untied, and the bosom began to slide down and show his undershirt. By the time the first verse was concluded, everybody was giggling, and Peter, thinking the folks were laughing at the song, also laughed heartily. Then the company laughed more than ever.

So Peter felt encouraged, and he dashed into the second verse with enormous enthusiasm, making comic gestures and screwing up his face in order to make the performance more amusing than ever. His exertions dropped the "dickey" down two or three inches farther, and the company roared. Peter could hardly sing for laughing. He considered that he had never made quite such a hit before. At the end of the second verse he joined in the general merriment, and, after wiping his brow with his handkerchief, he plunged into the third verse, which he sang with greater humor than ever. By this time the "dickey" had slid down under his vest and had begun to appear below it in front, and as poor old Peter finished the verse amid peals of laughter, his eye happened to light upon something white hanging down in front of him like a masonic apron. His countenance suddenly became serious. The appalling thought flashed across his mind that his clothes were falling off. Crimson with mortification and fear, he took another glance and saw that his "dickey" was gone. Then he understood the situation and he flew out of the room. The judge followed him, and said:

"What's the matter, old fellow?"

"Matter? Oh, Moses! Oh, thunder and Mars! Oh, by George! ain't it too bad! I'm ruined. This is the most awful thing that ever happened to me."

"Oh, never mind!" said the judge. "Glue your things together somehow and come in again. The folks don't care about it. It's only a bit of fun."

"Judge," said Peter solemnly, "it won't do. It has gone too far. I've tried to do my duty for years in this community, but this lets me out. I've got to emigrate. The want of a clean shirt drives me from my home and my country. I shall go, but mark me, judge, if after I have fled you find the body of a faithless washerwoman lying in the streets of this town, you may know that I killed her. I'll butcher her before I go to bed."

Then Peter put on his coat and went home. The washerwoman still lives, and Mr. Lamb remains in the drug store as usual.

FISHING WITH A WHEEL.

Most of the salmon which are caught in the Columbia River are trapped by the ingenious fishwheel. This effective contrivance is an immense wheel about thirty feet in diameter by eight feet in width, consisting of four great pockets of ordinary mesh fence wire. The wheel is placed in a favorable situation in swift-running water. The force of the current carries it around with a steady, resistless motion, plunging the monster scoops into the stream. Any hapless fish that wanders into the radius of this wheel is quickly lifted from the water, dropped into a slippery trough constructed in the wheel near its axle, and slides into a box, where its animate career ends. The efficiency of this invention is shown by the fact that one of these wheels has landed twelve tons in twenty-four hours

A LITTLE ABSENT-MINDED.

"What would be your notion of absent-mindedness?" asked Rufus Choate of a witness whom he was cross-examining.

"Well," said the witness, with a strong Yankee accent, "I should say that a man who thought he'd left his watch to hum, and took it out'n 's pocket to see if he'd time to go hum and git it, was a leetle absent-minded."

THE NEWS OF ALL NATIONS.

Bar English Artist from this Country.

William Henry Nelson, who arrived in New York, recently, on the *St. Louis*, in the second cabin, accompanied by his wife and a pedigreed bulldog known as Wolverson Lad, was detained by the immigration authorities and sent to Ellis Island because his plans were uncertain and might become a public charge.

He said that he was a well-known water-color painter in England, and had traveled all over the world. Mr. Nelson said that he would pass away his time at Ellis Island by painting a picture of the Statue of Liberty from the window of the prison.

Aged Suffragette Casts First Vote.

At the age of ninety-four, Mrs. Elizabeth Leavitt, of Venice, Cal., cast her first ballot at the last election. She has been a firm believer in votes for women, and thinks the Progressive cause will be the final aid to this end.

Two Drown in Gas Tank.

Hugh Murphy, 30 years old, of Cohoes, and F. S. Miller, of Cincinnati, Ohio, were killed in a large gas tank in Cohoes, New York. Miller was an expert gas-tank builder. He had been sent to Cohoes to do some repairing and had just finished his task and left the tank, when Murphy, who was helping him, was overcome by gas fumes.

Miller entered the tank, and putting a rope around his companion signaled to two men at the top to draw the unconscious man up. When nearly to the edge of the tank Murphy partially regained consciousness and struggled as the others were attempting to lift him out.

The rope became unfastened and Murphy dropped back into the tank, striking Miller, who was standing on a ladder several feet below. Both men fell into about ten feet of water in the bottom of the tank, and were drowned.

Says New Puritanism Needed.

Governor Marshall, of Indiana, in a non-political address at a local theater, at Butte, Mont., declared that he would rather see the American people following a false god than no god at all. He said the country was in need of a new puritanism that would make every man follow the dictates of his own conscience rather than the laws of legislatures and advice of legal counsel.

"There are three classes of men in this country," said Governor Marshall. "There is the man that obeys the law because he fears it; the man that obeys the law because he respects it, and thirdly, and best of all, there is the man that obeys the law for neither of these reasons, but because his heart and mind are right."

Auto Muffler Ordinance Passes in New York.

A new automobile ordinance making it compulsory for the operators of all motor-driven machines to use a muffler or silencer at all times, went into effect in New York recently. The ordinance was drafted by the Touring Club of America, and is expected to furnish a model for similar legislation in practically all large American cities.

The ordinance provides a fine of $100 for any driver who uses a cut out or other apparatus which will allow the gases to escape without passing through a muffler.

Tablet Unveiled for Lad Who Lost Life to Save Others at Niagara.

Tribute to the memory of Burrell Hecock, the seventeen-year-old Cleveland boy, who lost his life at Niagara Falls last February in a heroic attempt to save two other lives, was paid by several hundred admirers and friends recently at Cleveland, Ohio. A memorial tablet of bronze was unveiled in the Glenville Congregational Church, of which young Hecock was a member.

The tablet reads:

"In memory of Burrell Hecock. His chivalrous spirit rose to the cries of distress, and he lost his life while heroically trying to save others at Niagara Falls, Sunday, February 4, 1912."

The Reverend C. N. Lemon, of the North Congregational Church, delivering the memorial address, said:

"He was not an angel, nor a molly-coddle, but a strong, Christian man in the making."

American Balloon Bursts in Germany.

An hour before the time set for the international balloon race for the Gordon Bennett Cup, in Germany, the American balloon *Kansas City II.* exploded while being filled. No one was injured, although the pilot, John Watts, was standing near. The cause of the explosion has not been learned.

Doctor Pearson Gives $5,000 to Boy Scouts.

Doctor F. S. Pearson has presented $5,000 to the Great Barriugton Boy Scouts, to be used as the basis of a building fund. Another announcement will soon be made in regard to several similar gifts which are expected from other wealthy residents.

This gift is only one of several public bequests by Doctor Pearson, which include a school scholarship and prizes. Doctor Pearson is one of the wealthiest men in South Berkshire, and has large interests in Mexico, besides heavy railroad holdings in the United States.

United States Treasurer Asks for Bonded Employees.

The cash transactions of Lee McClung, treasurer of the United States, with the business world during the fiscal year 1912, climbed to the enormous total of $4,837,226,388, the highest in the history of the country. This amount, $300,000,000 greater than the previous year, represents the combined income and expenditures of the government.

Including the intra-departmental transactions, which necessarily involved duplication, the total amount of money handled by the divisions of the treasurer's office reached $6,601,731,502.

This sum passed through hundreds of hands in the treasury, but only one official was bonded for its security—the treasurer of the United States—whose bond is only $150,000, and who by law is personally held responsible for every cent of the billions that pass through his office yearly.

In the few cases of defalcations which have occurred in the treasury, Congress has invariably relieved the treasurer, but Mr. McClung, like his predecessors, maintains that every man in his office who handles money should be bonded. Under present conditions he must depend largely upon the honesty of his subordinates and a comprehensive system of checks against individuals and groups of individuals to detect irregularities.

The bureau of engraving and printing turned out during the year $870,000,000 in paper United States currency, to take the place of notes worn to unfitness for circulation.

Trainer Murphy in Bad Shape.

Friends of "Mike" Murphy, the veteran trainer of the University of Pennsylvania, are more concerned about his condition at this time than they have ever been, and it is said that a trip to some Western resort, probably Denver, is the best thing for the man who has developed more athletes than any other single individual.

At first it was thought that California would be the best place for him, but Doctor White and other members of the university faculty thought that the higher and drier climate of Colorado would be the best. The California trip, however, has not yet been abandoned, but it is certain that within the next week or so Murphy will leave the city, and some say they fear that the old man is about through.

When Murphy appeared at Franklin Field on October 4, he then could scarcely speak above a whisper, but he attributed it to a cold that he caught on the trip to Stockholm. When his vocal condition failed to improve after treatment by some of the best specialists in the city it was seen that his real trouble was not merely with the larynx, but that they feared that more serious complications had affected the wonderful little man.

It is feared that he will not be here to coach the university track team next spring, and talk is heard already in exclusive circles as to who will be his successor. Indications along these lines point to Doctor Joseph C. McCracken, the old track-team star and football guard, who was the mate of Truxton Hare when Pennsylvania had football teams that were a power.

Though 75, a Fine Skater.

Despite his seventy-five years, Benjamin Mathes is willing to match his speed at roller skating with that of any of his grandchildren. His neighbors around Third Avenue and Eighteenth Street, College Point, are inclined to bet on Ben if it comes to a contest.

Every day recently they have seen him show speed on rollers.

"I can skate like a young fellow," he said. "I was in the roller-skating business years ago in Boston. My folks are afraid

I'll fall and hurt myself, but," and he performed several intricate heel-and-toe evolutions on his skates. "I guess that doesn't look like falling."

Mr. Mathes, who has a fruit stand about a half mile from his home, skates to and from it daily.

National Bank Overdrafts Less.

The amount of overdrafts in national banks was lower on September 4, the date of the last call, than ever before. Controller of the Currency Murray, who recently urged national banks to eliminate overdrafts, made that announcement recently.

The September call showed an aggregate of $20,000,000 in overdrafts among the 7,400 national banks. This was .33 per cent of loans and discounts, and .19 per cent of total resources. Compared with November, 1904, when overdrafts reached their highest point, the number of banks had increased 35 per cent, and overdrafts decreased 63.6 per cent.

Mr. Murray said this was particularly gratifying for September, when overdrafts were usually large because of the crop movement. The highest ratio of overdrafts, 1 per cent, was shown in the Southern States, and the lowest, one-twentieth of 1 per cent, in the Eastern States.

Doctor Says Vacations Needless.

Doctor Edward Lee Thorndike, head of the department of psychology in teachers' college, at Columbia University, in a lecture delivered recently, said that the human mind needed no rest save in sleep. No vacation was ever needed, and there was absolutely no limit to what the human mind could accomplish, he said, when all the circumstances for mental efficiency were present. He declared there had probably never been a case of collapse from fatigue due alone to overworking the mind.

Doctor Thorndike agrees with the late Professor James, of Harvard, when he said: "The more the mind does, the more it can do."

He continued:

"During no waking moment is there any legitimate excuse for idleness on the part of the mind. Instead of a rest or vacation, the mind should be given new work and supplied with a new interest and motives. It should never be allowed to rest save in sleep.

"At the end of an hour of calculating I let my pupils walk up and down before the blackboard, and this additional effort enables them to continue for another hour. Repugnance to work is overcome by seeing results. So until the habit of work is firmly fixed upon one it is necessary to engage in work for which the brain of the worker is peculiarly fitted, in which it takes pleasure and which brings it tangible results. It would be impossible for an inventor to continue at work for weeks and months, as Edison, for instance, has frequently done, were it not that his interest was kept alive by successful achievement and its motive, that of aiding humanity or adding to the contents of the pocketbook, kept constantly in mind, and the repugnance to the work overcome by the satisfaction of success and the dream of honors and riches to come.

"If any worker is prevented from indulging in favorite work or games he becomes more fatigued than if he were kept constantly at work. No one should rest an instant save when sound asleep. Rest should come from indulgence in social or business talk, with family or friends, hunting, music, et cetera, but should never be absolute. The child aptly expresses this truth by saying: 'I am tired of not playing.'

"My rules for being able to work all the time are:

"Sleep all that is possible.

"Get rid of all physical ills.

"When one interest flags find a new one.

"Always keep on hand a supply of motives or desires.

"Never learn by a roundabout method what can be learned directly.

"Never allow the mind to dwell on a subject that may not be useful.

"Waste no effort. Never worry. Never become excited unnecessarily.

"Think out what should be done and then do it without talking about it.

"In a word," he concluded, "the whole doctrine is: Interest and motive for efficiency, and for protection sleep."

Barking Dog on Ship Prevented a Fatal Collision.

The barking of Prince, a Newfoundland dog, saved the steamship *Portenia*, Captain Neilson, from smashing into vessels of a fishing fleet off Nantucket, in a heavy fog. Captain Neilson told the story to friends on his arrival at Boston.

The dog had been on the bridge all night. When he grew excited and began barking that morning, the captain asked the lookouts what they saw. They reported nothing, but the vessel slowed down and was proceeding only under steerage way, when the first of the fishing vessels was sighted.

Savannah Ministers Fight "Noisy" Sunday.

Ministers of Savannah have now started a fight against noisy Sundays. The fight has been taken to city council, and the ministers purpose to make every effort to secure the passage of such an ordinance as will prohibit the noises which, it is claimed, disturb public worship on the Sabbath. Special complaint is made by the ministers against the "leather-lunged" ice man, "the trash man," and the automobilists who "honk" the horns of their machines while rumbling over the paved roadway.

The ministers claim that it has reached such a stage that it is almost useless to attempt to hold services in some of the churches. They desire an ordinance which will require a quiet hour during the morning when services are being held.

New York City Sheltered Many Skilled Laborers.

Out of 18,606 men who got shelter at the municipal lodging houses in New York City in the last year, one-third were skilled laborers, according to figures made public by the Joint Application Bureau of the Charity Organization Society and the Association for Improving the Condition of the Poor. Forty-three per cent of the lodgers were under thirty years, and 46 per cent were between thirty and fifty.

Twenty-four per cent were born in New York City, 30 per cent in other parts of the United States, 19 per cent in Ireland, and 27 per cent in other foreign countries. Intemperance had brought idleness to 60 per cent of the lodgers, and sickness and injuries to 7 per cent. The rest were victims of slack times, old age, et cetera.

In the past year the Joint Application Bureau gave material aid 5,323 times; gave out 14,684 wood-yard tickets, of which 11,431 were used; got work for 1,112 persons, gave transportation to 431, referred 442 applicants to churches and societies, put 96 in hospitals and institutions, advised and directed 4,546, and made 47,763 calls.

The bureau says there is no specific cure for vagrancy and homelessness, and it condemns bread lines.

"Couldn't Hit a Balloon," Writes Escaped Criminal.

Bruno Figurskis, the "Apache," alias "Bruno," alleged leader of the Allegheny River pirates, who apparently sank while swimming across the Allegheny River after Lieutenant of Police Thomas Carroll and two policemen had emptied their revolvers at him in midstream, convinced the police of Pittsburgh, Pa., that he still lives.

Two postcards reached police headquarters. They read:

"Three of you couldn't hit a balloon. Yours at large, BRUNO."

"If that guy would stand on top of a fellow and shoot, he would hit the sky every time. BRUNO."

Orders were given to stop dragging the river for Figurskis' body.

Boys Find $600 in Old Bed.

A sum of money, estimated at from $600 to $1,000, was found recently by South Boston boys in an old feather bed stolen by them from a secondhand dealer's wagon for a bonfire. The find was brought to the attention of the officials at the subtreasury by a woman who presented three partially burned $10 bills for redemption. After the bed had been set afire the boys ripped the tick open and a bag of coin and bills fell out. A scramble for the money followed. Then they extinguished the fire, and after pawing over the feathers found more coin and many partly burned bills.

The money originally belonged to an old woman who while being cared for by a family named Whitlake, in South Boston, and supposedly without a penny, had concealed hundreds of dollars in her feather bed. Not long ago the woman died and was buried by the people who had sheltered her.

Some of the money was returned to the Whitlakes.

Lightning Kills Twin Babies in Crib.

Lightning killed twin babies in the home of Frank Barnes, at Silver Creek, Chautauqua County, N. Y., after first having shattered the rear of the home of William Eitstein, adjoining. The babies were asleep in a double crib and both were instantly killed, while Mrs. Barnes, who was also in the room, was unhurt.

Paper Bags in Garbage Cans Prevent Flies.

An oiled paper bag fitted into garbage cans is the newest method of circumventing the multitudinous fly. The device was suggested some time ago by C. T. Switaler, a Newton, Mass., man, and has been successfully tested for a couple of months past in the section of the South end bounded by West Newton Street, Shawmut Avenue, Massachusetts Avenue and Tremont Street.

Recently in this section a demonstration

of its working was given in the presence of Professor Charles T. Bruer, instructor in the department of economic entomology, and of Inspector John T. Donohue, of the sanitary department of Boston. The bags, it was explained, will supply a convenient means of removing swill, since they can be removed by the sanitary collectors at each visit, leaving the garbage can clean instead of in a condition favorable to the development of flies. The plan is indorsed by many sanitary experts and by the Woman's Municipal League.

Hatchet Thrown at British Premier Preserved as Relic.

An interesting addition has been made to the collection of historical relics at No. 10 Downing Street, the London official residence of the British prime minister. This is the hatchet which was thrown by a suffragette at Premier Asquith during his visit to Dublin. Mrs. Asquith specially asked that this hatchet should be given to her as a memento of the event, but the Dublin police could not grant her request, so a formal request for it was made by the secretary for home affairs.

The woman who threw the hatchet is now undergoing five years' imprisonment. The hatchet narrowly escaped Mr. Asquith, who was leaning forward at the time, and struck John Redmond on the head. But for the fact that he was wearing a silk hat of the heavy, old-fashioned type, it would have killed him. As it was, he sustained a wound from the effects of which he is still suffering.

Bars Paper Towels as Trouble Makers.

The overwhelming human impulse to hurl a great ball of moistened paper the size of an orange at the unsuspecting head of some fellow student has sounded the death knell of the sanitary paper towel in the Ogden public schools. After a glance over the linen supply bills last year the members of the board of education literally clasped the great rolls of immaculate paper towels in their arms. At the very outset of this school year the old-fashioned roller towel of cloth, instead of paper, will be back in its usual place on the wall.

The board members have no complaint to make against the paper ovation in considering towel for towel, but it was too much of an incentive for the youngsters to wash their hands. In fact, it was noted that hundreds of the students, particularly in the fourth to eighth grades, inclusive, failed to take the time to wash their hands; they just dipped them in the water and then grabbed a paper towel. So far as the public schools were concerned, the paper towel ceased to be a toilet requisite; it became a missile.

Women Can't Smoke in Washington Hotels.

Washington hotel proprietors have declared that they will not permit smoking by women in their hotels this winter. There is no demand for women's smoking rooms, they said, and they hope there will not be.

Big Buck that Was More than a Match for a Cougar.

It seems to be generally assumed that wild animals of different species keep the peace, but now and then the experience of some woodsman strikingly disproves this peaceful view of forest life.

Two sportsmen made a trip recently to the Kettle River region, in the State of Washington, and in the course of the shooting witnessed a rare occurrence.

They had been on the trail of a large buck for some time, and, as it chanced came in sight of him at the very moment when a cougar launched himself upon the buck from the limb of a tree. The cougar landed squarely on the buck's shoulders, almost throwing him to the ground.

The buck quickly recovered, and, throwing back his head, drove two prongs of his antlers into the cougar's body, and with a swing forward threw him to the ground. Leaping backward he then waited with lowered head for a second attack.

With a yell of rage and pain the cougar sprang upon him. He might as well have leaped against an array of bayonets, for he was caught on the buck's antlers and hurled several feet into the air.

The instant he struck the ground the buck was upon him, striking savagely with his forefeet, which cut like knife blades, and driving his antlers again and again into his body.

Finally they separated, and the cougar crawled forward for the final struggle. The deer was wounded, but still in excellent fighting trim. The hunters interfered. One of them walked up to the cougar and shot it through the heart.

Sea Level and Tides at Panama.

The nearness of the opening of the Panama Canal makes interesting the fact that the average sea level of the Pacific Ocean and the Caribbean Sea, at opposite sides of the Isthmus of Panama, is the same. This is the mean or average levels of the two waters during all days of the year. But there is a great difference in tides. The Caribbean tides are faint, rarely exceeding two feet, while the tides in the Pacific at Panama are not pacific, for they at times rise ten feet and sink ten feet below normal undisturbed sea levels. Without tide locks, currents would alternately rush in the canal from south to north entering, and from north to south escaping.

Harvard University Restrains Chattering Coeds.

Radcliffe College girls can no longer range freely in the Harvard library. They may enter not more than six in a group, and they must be "segregated" in a special room.

There are reasons. Here are the leading ones, as the Harvard librarian states them:

More than six girls make a crowd.

They chatter so much they disturb the other workers.

They litter the tables and desks with hats, hand bags, and papers.

They crowd out learned professors.

Worst of all, they distract the pages or attendants so that it is almost impossible for others to get books on time.

Barge Canal Boats.

Manager Macleay, of the development bureau, of the chamber of commerce, at Oswego, N. Y., has received some interesting figures from Louis Nixon, of the American Ship Building Company, relative to the size and capacity of boats that will ply the new barge canal when completed:

The barges are to be limited to 328 feet in length, though the locks are 335 feet in length. The boats will be 44 feet wide—a foot narrower than the locks—and will draw 12 feet of water. These boats will be capable of carrying a cargo of 2,000 tons. The construction will be of steel, and the estimated cost of such a carrier, less that of machinery needed for propelling the same, is $7,500.

The machinery need not be costly, as it will not be possible to drive these boats loaded at a greater speed than 4 miles an hour.

The old-style canal boats, built of wood and drawn by a mule or two, cost in the neighborhood of $7,500 each. It would be possible in the new boats to place several of the old ones in the hold and then have a lot of room.

It is not known what fuel will be used, but the probability is, engineers believe, that the power boats on the barge canal will mostly use crude oil. The reason for this is that it can be handled more cheaply than coal, and there will be no ashes from it.

Were boats permitted to navigate the canal burning coal it is believed that with all the restrictions placed against them, the refuse would practically all find lodgment on the canal bottom, thus hindering navigation.

Fewer Fatal Cases of Tuberculosis in New York.

In the thirteen years since the city of Greater New York was formed, according to statistics compiled by the department of health, the death rate from tuberculosis was reduced from 22.5 for each 10,000 of population, to 17.6.

Of the 100,000 patients treated in the city's free tuberculosis clinics last year, more than one-third were Hebrews. Next in order come Italians and Austrians. The reports show an increased frequency of the disease among bankers, barbers, carpenters, and cigar makers.

Boy Killed Playing Circus.

While trying the "slide for life," hanging by his teeth, in imitation of a similar performance he had seen at a summer resort, John Makewski, 14-year-old son of John Makewski, of 22 Whitcome Street, Webster, Mass., fell to the ground, 25 feet, and was killed. His skull and hips were fractured.

Makewski and several companions ran a wire between two trees. Makewski was the first to make the try, and had just left the starting point when he lost his hold on the leather slide. He had been held by his companions until he had got up his nerve to make the start.

Crosses Ocean to Forgive Priest.

Mrs. Marie Gillet, a widow, a resident of Calumet, Mich., for 43 years, has left for Ronchamp, near Paris, France, in response to a request from an aged priest who, according to a letter from the mayor of Ronchamp, swindled her out of £100,000 years ago by making himself instead of her the beneficiary of a will, and who, conscience-smitten, now asks forgiveness. The swindle was later discovered by the mother, who dared take no action. The priest is now 88 years of age.

Baby Drowned in 4 Inches of Water.

The baby son of Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Hasker, of 63 Camden Street, Lynn, Mass., was drowned in a wash boiler in four inches of water. The child, named Thomas Hasker, Junior, was 15 months old, and had

been left in the kitchen, when he in some way fell into the boiler.

Mrs. Hasker had gone to a near-by store, and was gone from her house less than three minutes, she says. On returning the baby was nowhere to be seen. Her search led to a closet, in which was the wash boiler. There she found her baby, lying face down. Neighbors summoned a doctor, who worked over the little one a long time, but was unable to find any sign of life.

Heiress Escapes from Asylum Dressed as Man.

It is now known that the escape of the young heiress, Baroness van Goehorn, from an asylum for the insane near Brussels, Belgium, was planned and carried out by her advocate, Monsieur Dejardin.

The conspirators arrived outside the asylum in an automobile and gave, as prearranged, three "toots" with the horn. The baroness, whose window was near the ground, jumped out and was caught in the arms of her friends below. She immediately donned male attire, including a large overcoat and a golf cap, and she even put on a false beard and carried a light cane.

The automobile traveled at top speed, the baroness spending the night at the house of Monsieur Dejardin's parents. The next day she proceeded to Paris, where she is now staying.

Find Coal Mine in City Park.

A coal mine in Forest Park, St. Louis, lately discovered, promises to help in cutting down the municipal high cost of living. The city will burn this winter many tons of fuel on which not only the bridge arbitrary, but the regular freight charge and the operators' profit have been saved.

A vein of high-grade bituminous coal has been found on the spot where the United States government building stood at the World's Fair, and is being mined for the city's use.

Thirty tons of the coal have been taken to the Forest Park bird cage and fifteen tons to the monkey house, which have to be heated in winter.

New York Dealers Not to Raise Coal Prices.

"The retail price of anthracite coal for domestic consumption was fixed at $6.50 a ton at the beginning of the winter season on the first of September. It will not be raised this winter."

This quotation from the big anthracite coal operators and the large retail firms of New York City sets at rest the alarming rumors which have been circulated that hard coal would reach the same price as was reached in Detroit, where $8.75 was demanded for a ton.

"We have been assured by the operators that the price will not be advanced," said Harry L. Barber, one of the biggest retail dealers. "The cause of the present shortage is given by them as due to the fact that most of their cars are being utilized to supply the Western markets.

"Heretofore the Western dealers received the following winter's supply in April and May, but because of the strike in the coal fields during that period none was shipped. They are now doing their utmost to ship as much as they can West before the snowstorms set in.

"As soon as the West is supplied the Eastern markets will receive their coal. It is true that we are a bit short of coal in the East, but this is due to householders who have become alarmed at the threatened high price of coal and have been filling their bins to their capacity."

Father of 18 Children 73 Years Old.

What is believed to be the largest family of children in the State of Iowa was augmented recently by the birth of a girl, the eighteenth child of Captain D. K. Ewalt, aged seventy-three, a farmer living near Albion. Mrs. Ewalt is thirty-nine years of age. She is Ewalt's fourth wife, and has borne him seven children. She also has seven by her first husband.

Czar of Russia the Richest Man.

While Russia is a frequent and large borrower among the nations of the earth, Czar Nicholas, according to a statement recently presented to his majesty by the imperial treasurer general, is the richest man in the world. The statement is couched in fanciful language, but the facts which it recites are said by St. Petersburg bankers to be beyond dispute.

"Your majesty," says Baron Menchikoff, "need have no fear of ever coming to suffer the stings of poverty. Financially, you are solvency itself. With one hand you could buy out the American multimillionaires, Rockefeller and Morgan, and still have sufficient in the other to talk business with Baron Rothschild. Or, if you prefer, you can take over the Krupps, although I would not recommend the investment."

Czar Nicholas is very angry with Baron Menchikoff and his playful ways, and rebuked him soundly for indulging in "such undignified comparisons."

The czar's civil list amounts to nearly two millions sterling, including the amounts paid to the grand dukes; and of this sum more than a million is available for his own private purposes. Then he owns lands in Russia in Europe which cover an area equal to that of the whole of Nevada, of which the revenues reach the vast sum of $20,000,000 per annum, of which $5,000,000 is paid to the grand ducal families. The czar's lands in Siberia bring him in another $7,500,000, although they are at present largely undeveloped. Altogether, including interest on savings, the czar's income exceeds $30,000,000, and is increasing rapidly. He sets aside each year a large sum for each of his four daughters, so that if any one of the royal princes contracts a marriage in that quarter he will do extremely well from a worldly point of view—though, of course, the exact disposition of the czar's huge fortune is known only to himself and his financial adviser.

Women Treasury Clerks Allowed to Make Tea.

By special order of Secretary MacVeagh, the women employed in the treasury department may hereafter make their own tea in the Treasury Building. A room has been set aside for the purpose, but each woman wishing to use the room must provide her own teapot, sugar, tea, and cup. The department will supply hot water from an enormous kettle set up in one corner of the room. Men will not be admitted.

Many officials have at various times suggested that congressmen should take tea in the afternoons on the terrace of Capitol Hill, as English lawmakers do on the terrace of the House of Parliament. But so far only in the state department—probably on account of diplomatic association—has the tea-drinking habit taken hold. Huntington Wilson, assistant secretary of state, and Alvah A. Adee, second assistant secretary of state, have tea served at their desks every afternoon at 4:30 o'clock.

Fishermen Get $30,000 for Half-hour Delay.

Doctor Elliott and George Bowes, of Tacoma, Wash., consider themselves $30,000 richer because they were delayed half an hour in Seward harbor, Alaska, by a whale that apparently was in distress. They were in a launch en route to the shark fishing grounds when their way was barred by a big whale that was threshing the water's surface, seemingly in great agony.

When the whale departed he left floating on the surface of the water nine lumps of ambergris, strung together weighing 52 pounds. The two men harvested the crop and say it is worth $40 an ounce.

When Portugal Was Great.

The announcement that Portugal is to be linked up by "wireless" with "all the Portuguese colonies" is a reminder of the vanished greatness of what was once the leading colonizing empire in the world. From Lisbon in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries went out marines through the unknown and uncharted oceans to Africa, India, and the New World to the west, and planted the flag of Portugal in every corner of the globe. But in Africa alone has Portugal maintained its hold of colonies of any magnitude. In India are little bits of Portuguese territory, Nova Goa, southeast of Bombay, being the capital of all Portuguese colonies east of Cape of Good Hope; while as far east as China the Island of Macao, in the Canton River, first colonized nearly 400 years ago, still owns the sovereignty of the government at Lisbon.

Puts Boys in Jail as Parade Passes for Punishment.

City Recorder John E. Schwartz, of Savannah, Ga., adopted a unique method of punishing two small boys who were before him, charged with throwing rocks at two colored boys.

The evidence showed the youngsters were guilty, and the recorder directed their incarceration in the barracks until the street parade of a circus showing at Savannah was concluded.

Britain's King Forgot His Kilts.

It was said that when King George returned to Balmoral after a round of shooting visits he was obliged to appear in a gray lounge suite when the Royal Highlanders, 100 strong, assembled with a full battery of bagpipes to greet him. He usually climbs into his kilts on the train when he enters the Highland country, but this time some careless attendant forgot to include the necessary garments in the royal luggage.

Among English sportsmen the king is reckoned the fourth best shot. He has had a varied experience with shot gun and rifle. He has shot crested screamers in the Argentina pampas, quail and kangaroo in Australia, and elk and buffalo in Ceylon.

A new shooting motor car has just been built for King George. It follows the

lines of the old body brakes, and is fitted to carry eleven guns. A canopy extends the whole length of the car, fitted with side storm curtains. Spare wheels and parts are carried as well as the arms and ammunition and luncheon supplies. Blue leather is used for the cushions, and the body is painted in the royal colors.

Can't Find Woman Able to Fill this Job.

Miss Margaret Valentine Kelly, who recently resigned as examiner of the bureau of the mint, at Washington, will be succeeded by a man. She was assistant director of the mint, and received the highest salary paid any woman in the employment of the government. No woman has been found with the expert knowledge and training necessary to take her place. Miss Kelly is to be married to Major Robert Callan, of the coast artillery corps.

Ruins Found of People Who Lived Long Before the Pharoahs.

Actual remains of a prehynastic colony in Egypt, the only ones ever discovered so far as known, have been found at Abydos. The information was forwarded by Professor Whittemore, of the Egypt exploration fund, to Mrs. Marie M. Buckman, of Boston, secretary of the organization for the United States.

Professor Whittemore writes:

"Beneath a few inches of clean windblown sand lies a thick, dark stratum, composed of sand mixed with burned wood, fragments of pottery, animal bones, and decayed vegetable matter. Of particular interest are two great hearths, each about twenty feet in diameter. Despite a careful search no trace of huts of any kind was found. That the people spent much time in the manufacture of flint implements is apparent from the vast number of chips and finished instruments found."

Price of Silverware Increases.

Owing to increase in the price of silver bullion manufacturers of sterling silver flatware have advanced the price of spoons, forks, and tableware approximately ten per cent.

In January last silver bars were quoted in the New York market at fifty-seven cents an ounce. The reason given for the upward movement is the fact that the Indian government has come into the market as a heavy buyer of silver bullion.

$271,721 for Pennsylvania State Militia from Uncle Sam.

The Pennsylvania militia on the basis of an enlisted strength of 9,705 men will receive $271,721 out of this year's allotments for military purposes. There are two sums of $2,000,000 each available this year. One is authorized by the act of 1906 for arms, equipment, and pay during maneuvers, and for promotion of rifle practice. The other $2,000,000 is set aside by the secretary of war for ammunition and supplies for the militia of the various States.

Pennsylvania's apportionment follows:

For arms, equipment, and camp purposes, $100,433; promotion of rifle practice, $33,477; ammunition, $56,240; supplies, $81,570.

Snodgrass Speaks of Muff that Lost Series.

Fred Snodgrass, center fielder for the New York National League team, whose muff of a fly ball in the tenth inning of the last game aided the Boston American League club in winning the world's championship, has arrived at Los Angeles, Cal., to spend the winter. He was accompanied by Arthur Shafer, utility infielder of the New York team. Snodgrass will play with the Oxnard team during the winter.

Snodgrass said that he was "frozen to the marrow" when his fatal misplay occurred.

"I didn't seem to be able to hold the ball," he said. "It just dropped out of the glove, and that was all there was to it."

He said he was more sorry on Mathewson's account than his own.

Woman Dies While Showing Friends How Relatives Expire.

While describing how her husband and son had died suddenly, Mrs. Jane Paver, 60 years old, of Marysville, Ohio, slipped down in her chair at the dining table of Mrs. Rebecca Violet, of Bellefontaine, where she was a guest.

The other guests thought she was illustrating how they had died, but Mrs. Paver fell from the chair dead.

Czar May Abolish Exile to Siberia.

That Russia is to abolish the dread decree of banishment to Siberia by order of the czar, is the news received in this country in advices from St. Petersburg.

The Russian minister of justice, it is said, is preparing a bill completely abolishing penal servitude in Siberia, and substituting the same punishment in the penitentiary of European Russia. Of late years the number of convicts in Siberia has been increasing and there have been protests from the free population that the country is overrun with the scum of European jails.

The authorities recognize that the dumping of convicts in Siberia is seriously hampering the development of that country.

Siberia is a name which long has struck terror to the political enemies of the Muscovite dynasty. It stretches away from European Russia in a vast snowy ribbon to the Sea of Oshotsk, bleak, forbidding, and unhealthy, but nearly as rich as Alaska in mineral deposits.

In the summer time Siberia for the most part becomes a carpet of bright green moss and luxuriant grasses upon which herds of semiwild cattle and horses feed. In the fall the boggy tundra is red with its crop of cranberries, and then the arctic winter shuts down like a gray backdrop, and for seven months the blizzard has complete autonomy from the Urals to the ice-locked eastern gulf of Anadir. Then it is that the sufferings of the exiles become so great that even death is preferable.

Of the many colonies which Russia maintains in Siberia, populated by more than 200,000 prisoners and their families, the island of Sakhalin off the eastern coast is credited by all travelers in this section of the czar's country as being the worst. It is 670 miles square and its surface is diversified by hills and valleys. The climate is damp and cold throughout the year because of the presence of ice floes near by. Visitors are not desired on the island, and those who go there do so at considerable risk.

Sakhalin, the principal penal city, is thronged with men and women whose records are scarlet, and notwithstanding the strict patrol, life is endangered as the stranger walks the streets. Murder is of daily occurrence and morals forgotten in the general wretchedness and poverty.

An Englishman, who recently returned from an extensive tour of Siberia, writes that the Nihilist who throws a bomb, are chained together, prodded with bayonets, and lashed with the knout as they struggle over the soggy tundras to some far destination, where the standards of cultured society are reversed and the worst knave ranks uppermost. Some of them go to the mines and others are employed in railroad construction. The chains that yoke them to their wheelbarrows are never unfastened until death finds them in harness and eager to go.

When a prisoner is sentenced to exile his head is partly shaved in a diagonal streak from his left temple to the nape of his neck, and he is clothed in a gray suit, which destroys the identity of prince and mujik as completely as the grave.

It would be strange, of course, if there were not some bright illuminating paragraphs in the squalid annals of this land of misery and death in life. And so it is true that thousands of brave women are living there to-day, enduring frightful hardships, to be with their husbands, living a life of absolute hopelessness in order to be able to say an occasional word of cheer to the wrecked bodies chained night and day to the construction carts. On the island of Sakhalin, too, is a heroic woman named Eugenie de Meyer, rich, young, and beautiful, who has given her life over to the cause of caring for the convicts during the long, fierce arctic night and the damp, disease-breeding summer, and she is known to the tsaritsa as well as to the exiles as the "angel of the irons."

Upon the efforts of this woman, working upon the kindly nature of the empress, probably lies the responsibility of bringing about the abolishment of penal servitude in Siberia and the abrupt termination of this nightmare of modern civilization.

Propose Uniform Scale of Weights for Boxers.

For the first time in the history of boxing in the United States, an official attempt will be made by the New York State Athletic Commission to fix an international standard of weights to govern championship bouts in the various classes. The commission hopes to get its schedule recognized by the authorities governing the sports in England, France, and Australia.

The following weight scale, drawn up by the New York commission, is now on its way to the governing bodies in the three countries named, and is expected to receive their approval: Paperweight, 108 pounds; bantam weight, 115 pounds; featherweight, 125 pounds; lightweight, 135 pounds; welterweight, 145 pounds; middleweight, 158 pounds; light heavyweight, or "commission weight," 175 pounds; heavyweight, 175 pounds and over.

The commission, in fixing the scale, also stipulated that the various weight limits should be made at the ringside. Ringside weighing has many opponents in this country, and it is believed that a modification of this rule will be agreed upon later by the international bodies concerned.

The commission's schedule calls for a new class to include boxers too heavy to make 158 pounds ringside, yet too light to compete as full-fledged heavyweights. The idea is to do away with contests in

which a man weighing 165 pounds meets an opponent carrying 200 pounds or more.

In addition to the weights program, the commission has entered into an agreement with English, French, and Australian promoters by which uniform rules and penalties will be mutually recognized.

Lost Aviators Spend Night of Horror on River.

Marshall Earl Reid, the young Philadelphia aviator, and Lieutenant Commander H. C. Mustin, of League Island, spent a night of horror drifting in Mauriee River in New Jersey, recently, following the explosion of the motor of their hydroaëroplane.

They were picked up early in the morning by a police boat, which had been searching the river all night.

Chief of United States Navy Praises Oil Fuel.

One cannot turn over the pages of the marine journals, or the newspapers that makes a specialty of shipping news, in these days, without reading frequent notices of the uses of fuel oil as a motive power for vessels of all classes. The use of petroleum for such purposes is only in its infancy, but is becoming so extensive that one can readily estimate to what vast proportions it is destined to grow. Engineer in Chief Cone, of the United States navy, sets forth the advantages of fuel oil, as follows: "Fuel can be taken aboard more rapidly and without manual labor and without interruption to the routine of the ship. The problem of fueling at sea is solved. Steam for full power can be maintained as readily as for low power. A vessel burning oil is capable of runs at full speed limited in duration only by the supply of fuel. There is no reduction in speed due to dirty fires or to difficulty in trimming coal from remote bunkers or to exhaustion of the fireroom force. There are no cinders, and the amount of smoke can be controlled.

"The weight of space required for boilers is reduced—first, by the reduction of heating surface required, and, second, by the shortening of firerooms. Consequent on the reduction in heating surface is a decrease in the weight and cost of boilers. Coal and ash-handling gear is eliminated. This renders unnecessary the piercing of the hull for coal trunks and discharges from the ash propellers and ash ejectors. The stowage and handling of oil is much easier than of coal, and will result in a much cleaner ship, with consequent increase in time available for drills. The mechanical supply of fuel to the boilers gives a prompt and delicate control of the steam supply, permitting more sudden changes in speed with coal, which is a tactical advantage. The nature of fuel oil permits the utilization of remote portions of the ship and of constricted spaces for its stowage."

The battleships of our navy designed to burn oil exclusively so far only number three—the *Nevada*, *Oklahoma*, and *Pennsylvania*. The *Arkansas* and *Wyoming* and *Texas* and *New York*, building, however, and *Florida*, *Utah*, *North Dakota*, and *Delaware*, already in service, have auxiliary oil burners, and can be converted from coal to oil at a moment's notice. The government's oil reserve is estimated at approximately 250,000,000 barrels, while the extreme annual need of the navy, it is thought, will not exceed 10,000,000 barrels for the next twenty-five years. But when all the navies of the world make correspondingly large uses of fuel oil and the merchant marine draws heavily upon the supply, there will be less talk about overproduction.

The new Knapp gas well at Point Au Barre, La., is yielding in the neighborhood of 18,000,000 cubic yards of dry commercial gas per twenty-four hours. The well is under perfect control by means of a valve. When released the gas flows to a height above the 25-foot steel derrick and the roaring noise produced by its escape can be heard for miles around.

Mr. Knapp, the owner, is making preparations to put down twelve wells at once, and to place the gas on the market.

The first oil-burning steam lighter for use in the shipping trade was launched at the Dialogue Shipyard, Camden, N. J., recently. She was christened the *Willard M. Taylor*. The lighter will be used exclusively in New York waters. She is of 200 tons, 115 feet long, with a beam of 30 feet, and will cost $50,000. Her oil-burning furnaces are said to be the newest type that have yet been designed, and more modern, it is said, and of greater efficiency than anything that has been used in the steamship service before.

The United States government is constructing oil-supply ships and is locating oil stations. One has been established at Bradford, R. I., one at Norfolk, Va., one at Charleston, S. C., and one at Key West, Fla. Each station has storage capacity of 700,000 gallons. The United States government is constructing an oil-supply station at Guantanamo, Cuba, where we now have a coaling station. It is worthy of note that at each oil station the government has made ample provision for increase in tankage. The merchant marine are active, arrangements now being under way for establishing oil stations on both ends of the canal. At Manila and Honolulu oil stations are now being established, serving oil to the merchant marine. It is known for a fact that oil-burning ships will have a great advantage over the coal burners in the strife for freight and passengers that shall ride the waters of the Panama Canal. Oil men anticipate considerable activity in this field in the early spring, as the storage oil is being tapped to meet the demand of the sales department of the big sales companies. The production of the California fields does not now meet the demand, as is shown by the pipe-line reports.

New York's Budget of $200,000,000 a Record.

The New York City budget for 1913 will probably exceed $200,000,000, the largest in the history of the city. Members of the budget committee were quoted as saying that the figures would be "in the neighborhood of around $200,000,000."

Last year's budget was $189,000,000.

Evers, New Manager, Chicago Cubs.

President Murphy announced recently that Johnny Evers would be the manager of the Chicago Cubs baseball team, starting with the season of 1913. Terms were agreed upon at Murphy's home. They met again one afternoon and signed up a contract.

"I do not think I could have made a better choice," said President Murphy. "Evers is my idea of an ideal manager, and, although he has been chased to the clubhouse by the umpires frequently he will make the Chicago club as great a club as did Chance. I have had a long conference with Evers, and we will continue along the same lines as in the past. There will be a few changes, which I cannot give out for publication at present."

This Dog Steals Corn for Horse.

Finding that corn was being consumed at an unusually increased rate in No. 6 fire station, Fire Chief Alleman, of the Altoona, Pa., department, accused the driver of overfeeding his team. The driver denied it.

Corn continued to disappear and several cobs were found each day in the stall of a certain horse. A watch was set, and it was found that "Buster," a dog mascot, was carrying the corn, an ear at a time, to the horse.

After Many Years Man Asks Forgiveness for Stealing Ride.

In a letter to B. A. Worthington, president of the Chicago & Alton Railroad, J. B. Smith, of Quinlan, Tex., asks forgiveness for having "beaten" the road out of his fare for a ride of 283 miles in 1893. He said he believed God had forgiven him, and he hoped the company would. If informed how much he owed the road, he said, he would pay it when he got able.

President Worthington wrote Smith that he was absolved, and added:

"We hope you had a pleasant ride on the 283-mile trip, even if you did not pay any fare; and let us hope that when you get started on your last trip to meet God, if you are required to ride over 14 different railroads to get to your destination, your last ride will be under as pleasant auspices as the 283 miles over the Alton in 1893."

Smith said in his letter he owed confessions to fourteen different railroads.

7,000 Centenarians in Europe.

Statistics published in Germany indicate that there are at present in Europe over 7,000 living centenairans. Bulgaria comes first with 3,888; there are 1,704 in Roumania, 573 in Servia, 410 in Spain, 213 in France, 197 in Italy, 113 in Austria-Hungary, 92 in England, and only 2 in Denmark. Longevity preponderates in the Balkan region, and is at a minimum in Scandinavian countries.

Says There Will Always be War.

"War is not over, and never will be so long as men are men," says Major General Leonard Wood, chief of staff of the United States army, who was at Los Angeles, Cal., recently, inspecting proposed sites for fortifications.

"The war in the Balkans," he continued, "surely gives the champions of arbitration something to think about. Arbitration will not maintain the peace of the world. A nation's only safeguard against the horrors of war is preparedness for war."

Urging an increase of the national guard in southern California, General Wood said:

"Although the United States has the best system of coast defense in the world, it will not keep a strong army from invading our shores. Unless you have men on their legs with guns in their hands you cannot keep an enemy from landing and establishing himself. You people must do your part toward building up a stronger national guard."

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We give herewith a list of all the back numbers in print. You can have your news-dealer order them or they will be sent direct by the publishers to any address upon receipt of the price in money or postage-stamps.

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524—The Plot of the Baron.
525—The Passenger on the Night Local.
526—A Double Mystery.
527—Clarice, the Countess.
531—A Blackmailer's Paradise.
532—Gipsy Madge, the Blackmailer.
533—Facing an Unseen Terror.
534—Idayah, the Woman of Mystery.
537—Zanabayah, the Terrible.
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540—The Masked Woman's Daring Plot.
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556—A Bad Man of Montana.
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558—Kid Curry's Last Stand.
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563—The Great Spy System.
564—The Last of Mustushimi.
566—A Mystery in India Ink.
567—The Plot of the Stantons.
568—The Criminal Trust.
569—The Syndicate of Crooks.
570—The Order of the Python.
571—Tried for His Life.
572—A Bargain With a Thief.
573—Peters, the Shrewd Crook.
574—The Mystery of the Empty Grave.
575—The Yellow Beryl.
576—The Dead Man on the Roof.
577—A Double-barreled Puzzle.
578—An Automobile Duel.
579—Jasper Ryan's Counter Move.
580—An International Conspiracy.
581—Plotters Against a Nation.
582—Mignon Duprez, the Female Spy.
583—A Mystery of High Society.
584—A Million Dollars Reward.
585—The Signal of Seven Shots.
586—The "Shadow."
587—A Dead Man's Secret.
588—A Victim of Magic.
589—A Plot Within a Palace.
590—The Countess Zeta's Defense.
591—The Princess' Last Effort.
592—The Two Lost Crittendens.
593—Miguel, the Avenger.
594—Eulalia, the Bandit Queen.
595—The Crystal Mystery.
596—A Battle of Wit and Skill.
597—Vanderdyken, the Millionaire.
598—Patsy's Vacation Problem.
599—The King's Prisoner.
600—A Woman to the Rescue.
601—Nick Carter in Japan.
602—Talika, the Geisha Girl.
603—By Order of the Emperor.
604—The Convict's Secret.
605—The Man in the Dark.
606—An Anarchist Plot.
607—The Mysterious Mr. Peters.
608—A Woman at Bay.
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629—The Disappearance of Monsieur Gereaux.
630—An Heiress to Millions.
631—The Man in the Biograph.
632—The Time-lock Puzzle.
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634—The Tiger-tamer.
635—A Strange Bargain.
636—The Haunted Circus.
637—The Secret of a Private Room.
638—A Mental Mystery.
639—The Sealed Envelope.
640—The Message in Blue.
641—A Dream of Empire.
642—The Detective's Disappearance
643—The Midnight Marauders.
644—The Child of the Jungle.
645—Nick Carter's Satanic Enemy.
646—Three Times Stolen.
647—The Great Diamond Syndicate
648—The House of the Yellow Door
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